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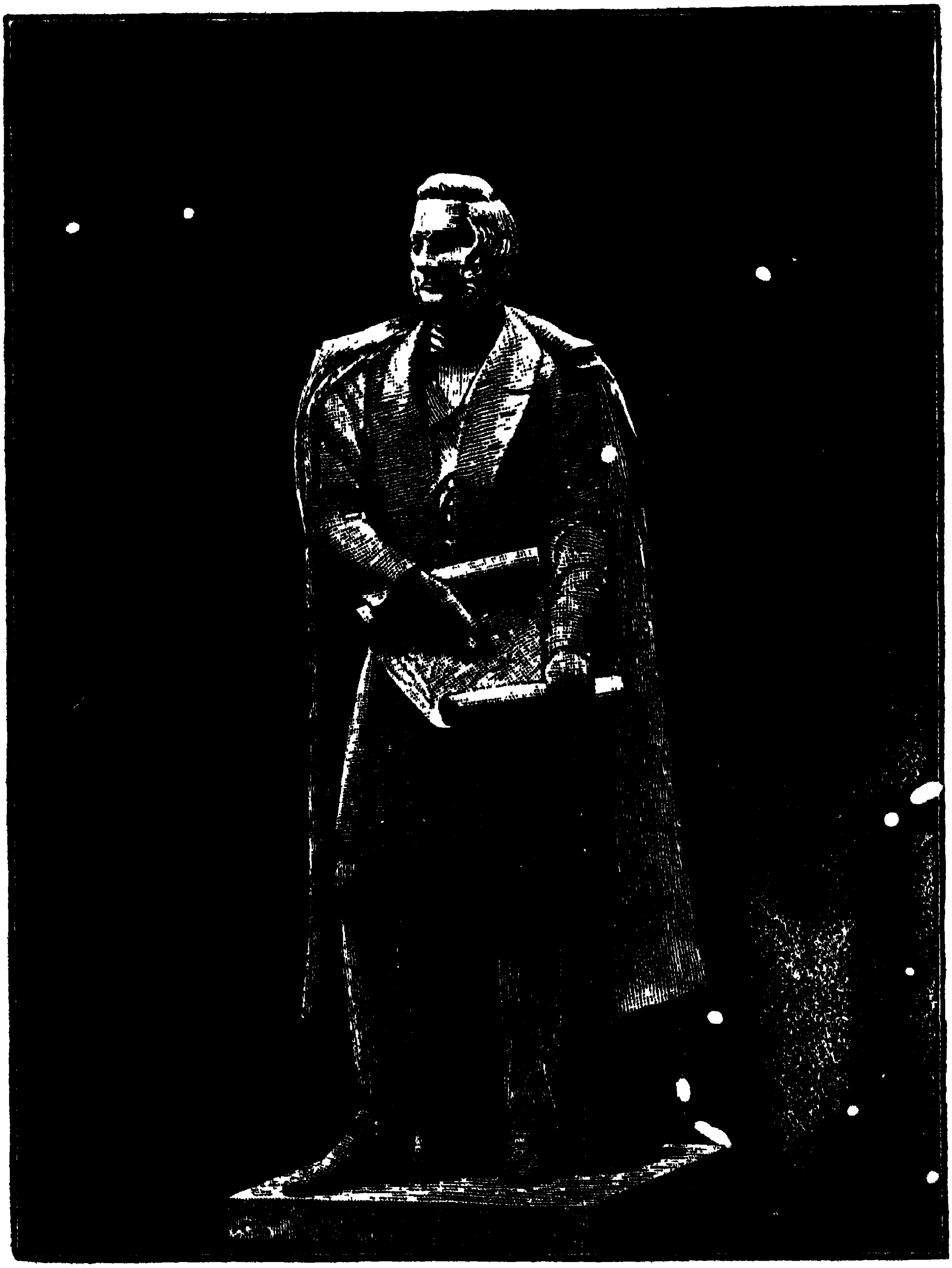

Statue of the Marquess of Dalhousie

Encyclopaedia of

INDIAN RULERS

SERIES EDITED BY
SIR WILLIAM WILSON HUNTER

THE MARQUESS OF DALHOUSIE

AND THE FINAL DEVELOPMENT OF
THE COMPANY'S RULE

By
SIR WILLIAM WILSON HUNTER

SET IN THIRTY SIX VOLUMES
Volume Twenty-Four

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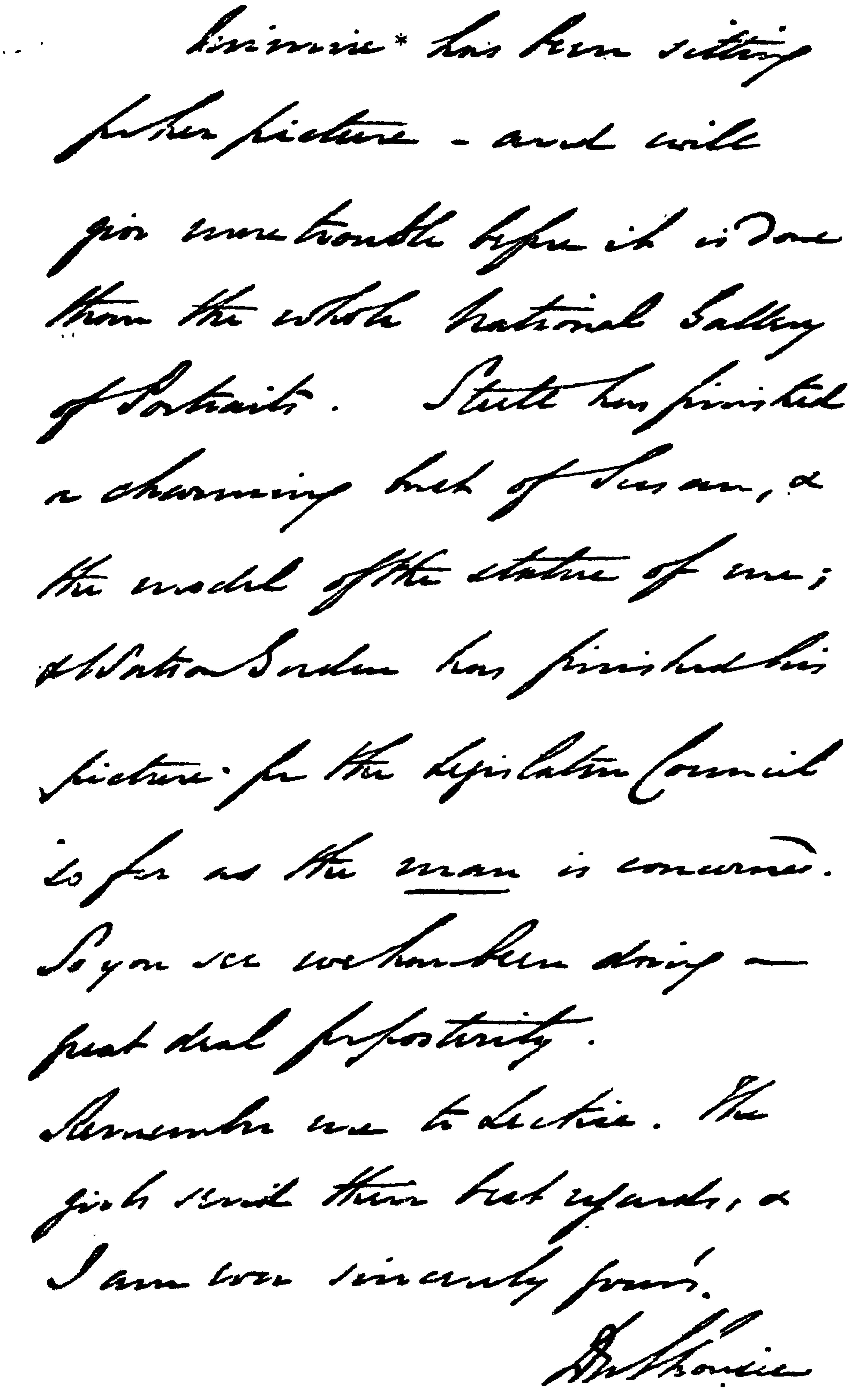
NOTE

The orthography of proper names follows the system adopted by the Indian Government for the *Imperial Gazetteer of India*. That system, while adhering to the popular spelling of very well-known places, such as Punjab, Lucknow, etc., employs in all other cases the vowels with the following uniform sounds:—

a, as in wom*a*n: *á*, as in l*a*nd: *i*, as in pol*i*ce: *í*, as in intr*i*gue: *o*, as in cold: *u*, as in b*u*ll: *ú*, as in s*u*re.


Grannie* has been sitting
for her picture — and will
give more trouble before it is done
than the whole National Gallery
of Portraits. Steell has finished
a charming bust of Susan, &
the model of the statue of me;
& Watson Gordon has finished his
picture for the Legislative Council
so far as the man is concerned.
So you see we have been doing a
great deal for posterity.
Remember me to Leckie. The
girls send their best regards, &
I am ever sincerely yours.
Dalhousie

FACSIMILE OF LORD DALHOUSIE'S HANDWRITING, *aet.* 45.

ERRATA.

Page 16, line 14, *for* 1848 *read* 1849.

„ 29, „ 14, *for* Lord Registrar *read* Lord Clerk Registrar.

„ 32, „ 24, *for* Titanesque *read* Titianesque.

„ 50, „ 7, *for* 7th *read* 13th.

Hunter's Dalhousie.

THE MARQUESS OF DALHOUSIE
AND HIS WORK IN INDIA

CHAPTER I

THE ARGUMENT

THE leading idea in these volumes is to present a series of historical retrospects rather than of personal biographies. Each little book takes some conspicuous epoch in the making of India, and, under the name of its principal personage, sets forth the problems which he had to encounter, the work which he achieved, and the influences which he left behind. Thus the rise and culmination of the Mughal Empire will be briefly sketched under the title of Akbar; its decay under that of Aurangzeb. The volume on Dupleix will sum up the struggle of the European nations for India, before the ascendency of the British. The present volume on Dalhousie exhibits the final developments of the East India Company's rule.

At the beginning of the century, the Marquess of Wellesley, a king of men, organised British India on the basis upon which it rested from 1798 to 1848. But during those fifty years, as we shall see,

the old fabric gradually wore out and its props began to give way. In 1848 another strong ruler came out from England to India, and laid afresh the foundations of the British Power—the foundations which, notwithstanding striking changes in the political control and administration, subsist to this day. It is with the work of this second builder of the temple of British Rule in India that the following pages deal. Lord Dalhousie's administration is now sufficiently removed from us to permit of calm historical treatment. Yet its consequences have so directly produced the India of to-day, as to give to his measures an almost contemporary interest. When the master-hand was removed, those measures had their reaction in the Mutiny. But the Mutiny of 1857 passed away in its turn, and left the permanent results of Lord Dalhousie's administration to develope themselves. The present foreign policy of India, the present internal problems of India, the new Industrial Era in India, are alike legacies of his rule.

For Lord Dalhousie did three things in India. He extended its frontiers, so as to bring them into inevitable although indirect contact with a great European nation on the one side, and with an ancient Asiatic power on the other. He at the same time consolidated the East India Company's internal possessions and the intervening Feudatory States, into the true beginnings of a united

Indian Empire. But perhaps his most permanent claim on the gratitude of his country is that by his far-reaching schemes of railways, roads, canals, and public works, he inaugurated the great revolution which has converted the agricultural India of antiquity into the manufacturing and mercantile India of our own day. Expansion of territory, unification of territory, and the drawing forth of material resources, these were the three labours given to Lord Dalhousie to accomplish in India: and in the three words, conquest, consolidation, and development, his work may be summed up.

Lord Dalhousie found India an isolated country. In the North-west a powerful and warlike people, the Sikhs, lay between us and Central Asia. By the annexation of the Punjab, Lord Dalhousie abolished that intervening military nationality. He advanced the British boundary to the foot of the mountains, and made British officers the wardens of the passes. Since his time the North-western frontier of India has been garrisoned by British armies, alike against the Muhammadan races of Central Asia and against Russia. Our Asiatic relations with Russia, which had previously been fitful, were brought by the conquest of the Punjab, gradually but inevitably, within the normal sphere of European diplomacy. The supreme factors in Indian foreign policy have been transferred from Calcutta and Lahore to London and St. Petersburgh.

The neutralisation of Afghánistán has taken the place of the neutralisation of the Black Sea.

The armament of India is now regulated not alone by the internal need of India, but by necessities which have been forced upon India from being brought into contact with the armed camp of European nations. The latest Viceroy Lord Dufferin's military policy and military expenditure were dominated by the responsibility of guarding against Russia the North-western frontier of India—the frontier which was substantially created by Lord Dalhousie.

On the opposite side of India also, in the North-east and the South-east, independent states separated us, until Lord Dalhousie's time, from our other great Asiatic neighbour, China. The annexation of the outlying Sikkim districts, by Lord Dalhousie in 1850, has brought us into contact with Tibet and the Chinese Empire. In 1888 the British representative in Pekin was endeavouring to arrange difficulties which were the direct although tardy results of that annexation; and a delegate from the Chinese Government recently came to India with a view to the same object.

In the far South-eastern promontory, also, Lord Dalhousie extended the British frontier. His annexation of the lower districts of the Irawadi slowly, but irresistibly, brought about a state of things which could only end in a British

conquest of Upper Burma. Lord Dufferin's Proclamation at Mandalay in 1886, by which Upper Burma passed under the government of Queen Victoria, was the natural sequel of Lord Dalhousie's annexation of Lower Burma in 1852. The extinction of the Burmese Empire has not only brought us into direct diplomatic relations with China, but it has also involved an indefinite recognition of certain semi-suzerain claims of the Chinese Emperor.

But far-reaching as have been the results of Lord Dalhousie's frontier conquests, his policy of internal consolidation seems destined to produce even more important consequences. That consolidation appeared at the time to be a unification of the Indian territories; it is slowly disclosing itself also as a unification of the Indian races. Lord Dalhousie was convinced, and with good reason, that the old system of ruling India under the make-believe of sham royalties and of artificial intermediate powers wrought misery to the people. He held himself bound to take every fair opportunity that offered for substituting an honest English administration. One native State after another passed under this policy to direct British Rule.

The map of India which Dalhousie pondered over during his voyage out, in 1847, was a much simpler problem in political geography than the map which he handed over to his successor. The

Punjab, Sikkim, a part of Cachar, Lower Burma, Sátára, and a part of Sind, marked the magnificent circumference of his conquests and annexations: Oudh, the Central Provinces, Baghát, Sambalpur, Jaitpur, Udaipur, Jhánsí, the Berárs, and part of Khándesh, represent the vast territories with which he filled in the centre. I should be merely begging the question with which this book will try to honestly deal, if I were in a preliminary chapter to utter one word of praise or blame regarding the policy that so prodigiously augmented the dominions and the responsibilities of England in the East. It suffices if we realize at the outset that it was Lord Dalhousie who made the modern map of India.

To lay any stress in these preliminary remarks on mere extension of territory would prejudge the whole question as to the merits or demerits of Lord Dalhousie's rule. For an increase of territory may be only a *damnosa haereditas* of political robbery, prolonged popular resistance, and financial strain. Lord Dalhousie would himself have desired that the causes and circumstances which led to each conquest or annexation should be accurately set forth, before any credit was claimed for it. He conscientiously believed that such title as he might have acquired to the gratitude of his countrymen was based, not upon the extent, but on the justice of his acquisitions. Whether he was right or wrong in this belief, I

shall, after honestly stating the facts, leave the reader to judge.

The territories which Lord Dalhousie conquered or annexed, he firmly bound together. His vast extension of roads, canals, steamer-routes, and public undertakings of many kinds, created facilities for commerce, and an effective surplus of the staples of commerce, such as had never before existed in India. But under his rule, also, four new engines of consolidation were set at work: railways, telegraphs, a half-penny post, and a great centralising system of education on a Western basis. I shall speak of each of these hereafter. For the moment let me quote the words of the earliest biographer of Lord Dalhousie concerning a single one of them. 'Railways,' wrote Sir Edwin Arnold in 1865, when they were still a new thing in India, 'railways may do for India what dynasties have never done—what the genius of Akbar the Magnificent could not effect by government, nor the cruelty of Tipú Sáhib by violence—they may make India a nation [1].'

It is to the consolidating influences thus put in motion by Lord Dalhousie that we owe the India of to-day, with its new mercantile era, its new intellectual activity, its new political awakening. His geographical unification of Indian territories is

[1] *The Marquis of Dalhousie's Administration of British India*, by Sir Edwin Arnold, vol. ii, pp. 241–2, 1865.

slowly but surely creating a sense of solidarity among the Indian peoples. For while Lord Dalhousie overleapt the old breakwaters between India and foreign nations, he also began the process of throwing down the ancient barriers between the races of India itself. And if he extended the foreign risks and responsibilities of India far beyond their previous limits, he also laid the foundation of a United India within her own frontiers.

I propose in this little book to write a brief but clear and connected narrative of Lord Dalhousie's conquests, as a whole, passing over for the moment the other events of his administration, which intervened between the conquest of the Punjab in 1848 and the conquest of Lower Burma in 1852. I shall then endeavour to present a similar view of what is known as Lord Dalhousie's annexation policy-that is to say of his systematic action in regard to the Native States which brought many of the Feudatory Powers in India under direct British rule. In this part of the work, also, I shall unfold the successive acts in the great drama of annexation, from that of Sátára in 1848, to that of Oudh in 1856, without interrupting the story by the intermediate measures of domestic administration.

Having thus shown how Lord Dalhousie built up the new India, by conquest and annexation, I shall exhibit the means which he took to consolidate it. For in Lord Dalhousie's great scheme of empire,

consolidation kept pace, step by step, with territorial extension. It will be my duty to indicate the series of beneficent measures of peace which his master-mind designed as the complement of his annexations and conquests by war. How he welded province to province by the iron bands of the railway and the telegraph. How he began that process of binding together the Indian races by a common system of education and by a community of interest, mercantile and political, which was altogether unknown in ancient India, and which forms the most significant feature of the India of to-day.

The time has not yet come to pronounce a final judgment on Lord Dalhousie's work. He himself forbad, by a Codicil, the publication of his papers until fifty years after his death. To Lady Connemara, his beloved daughter and devoted companion, who has kindly gone through the biographical portions of this book, I tender my grateful and respectful thanks. To Dr. Grant, the physician and friend of Lord Dalhousie during his Indian career and later life, I am under very special obligations not only for materials and verifications, but for the revision of the entire proof-sheets.

This little volume will, at any rate, correct the misunderstandings and half-knowledge which obscured Lord Dalhousie's administration at the time

of his death. I have carefully studied the works of that period, from the worthless masses of invective and panegyric, to the eloquent writings of Sir John William Kaye and Sir Edwin Arnold on the one side, and the calm expositions of Sir Charles Jackson and the Duke of Argyll on the other. I have compared their statements and conclusions with the Minutes and Despatches of Lord Dalhousie himself; with the voluminous State-papers and correspondence in the Parliamentary Blue Books; and with the miscellaneous materials now afforded by the biographies of Lord Dalhousie's contemporaries in India, especially by Bosworth Smith's most admirable *Life of Lord Lawrence*, and the lives of Sir Herbert Edwardes, Sir Henry Lawrence, Sir James Outram, and Sir Charles Napier. The result, while not justifying a final veredict as to the far-reaching consequences of Lord Dalhousie's rule, will enable us to obtain a clear and impartial view not only of his measures, but of the considerations which regulated his policy, and of the motives which guided the man.

CHAPTER II

The Man

First of all it is needful to distinctly realize the man. The strong personality of Lord Dalhousie formed so dominant a factor in his Indian administration, that any attempt to exhibit his public career without a clear view of his private character must fail. His character, indeed, was built on such solid foundations, and presented so majestic a front to his fellow-men, that the temptation is to allow the portrait in the foreground to occupy too much of the canvas available for my whole picture.

Fortunately, however, the life of Lord Dalhousie has been already written, although from inadequate materials, yet by able hands. Dr. George Smith's sketches in *The Friend of India* in 1861, and subsequently in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, form models of their kind. The narrative lately drawn up by Captain L. J. Trotter deserves the highest praise for its conscientious labour and artistic skill. I only hope that this little book may prove as meritorious in its own way, as an historical retrospect, as Captain Trotter's is excellent

as a personal biography. It is due to him to state that although the main body of my work was written before I had access to his volume, yet that I found it necessary to re-write the present chapter and enrich it from the new materials, especially those supplied by Dr. Grant, in Captain Trotter's book. In the other eleven chapters I confine myself to the materials which I had already collected.

James Andrew Broun Ramsay, tenth earl, and first and only Marquess of Dalhousie, was born at Dalhousie Castle on the 22nd of April, 1812. 'The house,' writes the Queen when recording her visit to it, 'is a real old Scotch castle of reddish stone.' Built in the twelfth century, and restored and added to in the present one, the stronghold of the Dalhousies now stands calmly on the beautiful bank of the South Esk, as the trains fly down the incline hard by, through Cockpen parish, before slackening their speed into Edinburgh. An ancestor of the family had saved King James the Sixth of Scotland in the Gowrie conspiracy, and the strong character of the long line of Lords of Dalhousie impressed itself alike on the history and the poetry of Scotland—from the Maecenas-Dalhousie of *The Gentle Shepherd* to the old bachelor *Laird o' Cockpen*.

James, the future Governor-General of India, was the third son of the ninth earl. His father,

a soldier of a noble presence, had served in the Peninsular War, and was, three years after James' birth, to command his own regiment at Waterloo. His mother was the heiress of the Brouns of Colstoun in Haddingtonshire—an ancient Norman family tracing their descent upwards through many illustrious houses to the Counts of Poitou. One of James' brothers, the second son, died very young; and James, while still a child, was taken along with his eldest brother by his parents to Canada, of which province his father had been appointed Governor-General. Canada formed the happy childhood-land of James' memory, wistfully looked back to in later life; the bright opening scenes of a manhood of labour, success, and sorrow [1].

When ten years old he was sent home to England in a small sailing brig. He spent the next seven years at Harrow, for the most part of the time with his eldest brother as his fellow-pupil, and with Dr. George Butler as their private tutor and headmaster of the school.

'One incident of his school-boy days,' writes Captain Trotter, 'may have helped to kindle his young ambition. In 1823, the Marquis of Hastings returned home from India, which he had governed for nine years with rare ability alike as a soldier and a statesman. In the following year he paid a

[1] The original materials for Dalhousie's youth were first published in *The Friend of India* at Serampur, January 31, 1861.

visit to his old school, and won the hearts of the Harrow boys by giving them a present of two sovereigns apiece. So princely a largess from a grey-haired hero of such fine manners, of a presence so commanding, must have filled many a boyish heart with other sentiments than gratitude alone. The conqueror of the Maráthás stood there in all his glory; and young Ramsay, for one, would see in that splendid old Harrovian the embodiment of a greatness which he, too, might hope some day to rival.'

In 1829 James' father succeeded Lord Combermere, as Commander-in-Chief in India. The eldest son, Lord Ramsay, accompanied him to the East, and James entered at Christ Church, Oxford.

That learned and ancient society was at this time the home of a brilliant group of young men, destined to play great parts in the history, not only of their own country, but also of India. Mr. Gladstone was an undergraduate, about two years senior in standing. Lord Canning who succeeded Dalhousie as Governor-General of India, and Lord Elgin who succeeded Canning as Viceroy of India, were among the friends of young Ramsay at Christ Church. He was regarded from the first as a youth of high promise, and a vacation tour in Northern Italy further stimulated his classical taste and love of learning. But the death of his eldest brother, Lord Ramsay, in 1832, broke in upon his reading during

the critical year before the final examination for his degree. James succeeded to the courtesy title as eldest son, and at the same time found himself involved in many family duties. He returned to Oxford and took the ordinary degree in 1833. But the examiners recognised his claims to something higher than a pass, and the exceptional circumstances of the case, by giving him an Honorary Fourth—then regarded as equivalent to a Second Class.

In 1833, Lord Ramsay came of age, and in 1835 he contested Edinburgh at the general election. The candidature of the scarcely fledged patrician against two veterans like Campbell the future Lord Chancellor, and Abercromby the future Speaker, (afterwards created Baron Dunfermline), was almost hopeless from the outset. It is chiefly memorable from his vigorous speeches at the hustings, the unexpected force of will with which he put down his own views on his committee, and the self-confident but prescient words in which he thanked his supporters after his defeat.

'I return,' he said, 'to my own pursuits with the sensation common to every man who feels that he has not to reproach himself that he has buried his talents in the earth; that so far as in him lay, he has done his duty to his country, his fellows and himself: and that, having cast his bread upon the waters, he has only to await in patient confidence the day

when it shall again be found[1].' To the triumphant majority against him he bade farewell in a good-natured joke: 'Ye're daft to refuse the Laird o' Cockpen.'

The defeat, indeed, sat lightly on the brilliant young man with whom politics then mingled with love. Soon afterwards, in January 1836, he married Lady Susan Hay, eldest daughter of his neighbour and family friend, the eighth Marquess of Tweeddale. 'Lady Susan Hay is described as a tall and very beautiful girl, a perfect mistress of French, and an accomplished musician. Her love of horses and dogs became proverbial in India, where she rode her husband's tours march by march, and was a familiar figure on the Calcutta Course, driving a pair of spirited steeds in excellent form. Somewhat impassive in society, her genuine Scottish kindness of heart, intellectual gifts, and charm of manner, made her adored in domestic life. Her death in 1853 completely overshadowed the remainder of her husband's existence on earth.

Two daughters filled up the happiness of their seventeen years of married life. The younger, Lady Edith, married in 1859 the Right Honourable Sir James Fergusson, Bart., the distinguished Colonial and Indian Governor. She died in 1871. The elder, Lady Susan, after nobly devoting herself to her father's declining years, and ministering to him to

[1] *The Times* article on Dalhousie's death.

the end, married in 1863 the Honourable Robert Bourke, now Lord Connemara, brother of a later Viceroy of India, the Earl of Mayo.

The year after his marriage, Lord Ramsay was returned to Parliament in 1837 for Haddingtonshire, a county in which his mother's influence, as heiress of Colstoun, was great. In 1838, however, he succeeded, on his father's death, to the Earldom, and his career in the House of Commons came to a close. A young conservative peer had, at that political juncture, but little chance of distinction in the House of Lords. So the new Earl of Dalhousie threw himself with characteristic vigour into what local work offered itself to his hand. He represented the Presbytery of Dalkeith, within which lay his own parish of Cockpen, as an elder at the General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland in 1839.

The great questions which split up the Church of Scotland four years later were already stirring men's minds. Lord Dalhousie, as an enlightened conservative of the disinterested type, sympathised in several important points with the reformers, and is said to have voted with them on what was then regarded as the *crux* of lay patronage. But while favouring enquiry and redress of grievances, he resolutely refused to be led into a line of wholesale innovation which he foresaw must end in separation, and which as a matter of fact did end, in 1843, in the Disruption of the Scottish Church.

This firmness appeared strange in so young a man, and gave deep offence to Dr. Chalmers who had mistaken the Earl's outspoken sympathy, and his hearty agreement on particular points, for a general concurrence in the ecclesiastical leader's programme.

Dr. Chalmers' friends placed Lord Dalhousie's name on his committee. But, says Captain Trotter, 'Lord Dalhousie not only refused to sit upon it, but delivered a solemn protest against the policy which he had been supposed to sanction. In accepting Dr. Chalmers' motion, the Church, he declared, "had already rung out her knell as the Established Church of Scotland." For his own part, he could no longer remain a member of the General Assembly. Suiting the action to the word, he took up his hat and walked out of the hall[1].'

The sense of isolation caused by this parting from friends whose talents he admired, and whose motives he respected, was deepened by the death of his mother. The Dowager Countess died in 1839, and the young Earl at twenty-seven years of age was henceforth to face life, stripped of all his immediate kindred among whom he had grown up. In 1842, the Queen paid a visit to Dalhousie Castle and admired from the drawing-room window, as her Journal records, the 'beautiful wooded valley, and a peep of the distant hills.' It is charac-

[1] For full details, see *The Friend of India*, January 31, 1861.

teristic of the somewhat haughty courtesy which in later years grew upon him, that he 'playfully reminded Her Majesty that the last English Sovereign who had approached the Castle was Henry IV; and he "had remained outside for weeks and never gained admission."'

The fall of the Melbourne Ministry made way for Sir Robert Peel; and Lord Dalhousie, who had early won the confidence of the great conservative statesman, was appointed Vice-President of the Board of Trade in 1843. Mr. Gladstone, his former fellow-undergraduate at Christ Church, was President; and on Mr. Gladstone's resignation of that post in 1845, the young Earl succeeded.

As President of the Board of Trade Lord Dalhousie found himself face to face with the railway mania of 1845–46. He laid before the Prime Minister a scheme for treating the new system of communication as a national concern, and for bringing it under a more direct and effective control by the State. Lord Dalhousie's admirers claim for him that if his proposals had been accepted, England would have been spared the wide-spread ruin of the railway panic, which soon afterwards resulted from leaving railway development to private competition. Whether it would have been in the long-run so productive of facilities to English commerce is another question. Sir Robert Peel, probably with good reason, believed

that a system of State railways would not at that time be accepted by Parliament.

Lord Dalhousie's scheme remained therefore a proposal only, until it fell to his lot to carry it out himself in India. 'It provided among other things,' writes Captain Trotter, 'that no new line of railway should be sanctioned, except on some clear ground of public advantage, commercial or strategic.' No sentence could better describe the basis on which the railway system of India--Lord Dalhousie's own child—has, without a single panic or a single check, been gradually but surely created.

As his counsel of perfection could not be adopted, the young President of the Board of Trade set himself to do the best with the means permitted to him. Every new line had to pass under review before sanction was accorded. Within a few months the number amounted to 332, representing an expenditure of 271 millions, besides many foreign schemes which had come for their capital to the English market. When the last day of the year arrived for receiving applications, over six hundred projects were deposited on his table.

Lord Dalhousie attacked the huge pile with an energy which amazed and wearied out his subordinates and coadjutors, but which nothing short of absolute illness could arrest. His persistent over-work at this period laid the foundation of painful future disease. In spite of physical pros-

tration he stuck to his task, labouring at his desk all day, and brilliantly defending his chief in the House of Lords at night. 'To him more than any other man,' says Dr. George Smith, 'Great Britain owes its railway system.' 'He will be a very leading man,' wrote Charles Greville, apropos of the crucial debate in May 1846, 'for he is popular, pleasing, and has a virgin unsoiled reputation, nothing to apologise for, and nothing to recant: and he is a good man of business and an excellent speaker.'

Sir Robert Peel resigned in the following month, having first expressed his sense of Lord Dalhousie's services by appointing him Lord Registrar of Scotland. As the Dalhousie estates (his mother's property of Colstoun had descended to him heavily burdened) did not yield over £1500 per annum, this addition of £1200 a year was doubly welcome to him as a mark of friendship from his beloved chief, and as a material addition to his income. When Sir Robert Peel laid down his office in June, 1846, and Lord John Russell urged the young Earl to accept office under the new Cabinet, Dalhousie declined. Lord John had however marked him as a man likely to do credit to any Minister, and next year, 1847, pressed on him the Governor-Generalship of India. So splendid an offer to a young nobleman, only thirty-five years of age, is perhaps the best evidence of the respect which Dalhousie

had inspired, not only among his own party, but in the cool judgment of English statesmen who differed from his views. But Lord Dalhousie did not accept the honour until he obtained the cordial concurrence of his late conservative chief, and the generous assurance of the new Whig Minister that it would in no way fetter his action in home politics, or affect his relations with former allies. Nor was it without a sigh of regret that the young Earl turned aside from the splendid parliamentary career which had opened to him, and elected for the certainty of being Governor-General of India, in place of the possibility of becoming Prime Minister of England.

On the 12th January, 1848, Lord Dalhousie landed at Calcutta with the Countess of Dalhousie and a brilliant staff, including his talented private secretary, Mr. Courtenay. The Honourable Francis Fane (afterwards Earl of Westmoreland) and a young relative of the Duke of Wellington, were among his Aides-de-camp. He had already begun to pay the penalty of an Indian career, that severance of the dearest domestic ties which takes the pleasure out of the most brilliant Indian success, by having to leave his two little daughters behind him in England. He was destined to pay that penalty to the full. Of the state of India on his arrival it will be my duty to speak hereafter; for the crisis which had then unwittingly been reached, forms the key-

note to his whole administration. Meanwhile it may save space, if I clearly exhibit at the outset what manner of man Lord Dalhousie appeared to his colleagues and contemporaries throughout his eight years of Indian rule.

Small of stature, but with a noble head, a most penetrating glance, and a haughty demeanour, 'the little man' of Government House first inspired awe in those with whom he came in contact; then trust; and finally an ardent admiration, in which loyalty to the master mingled strangely with personal love. He was the only one of the long list of Governors-General for whom both the great services in India, civil and military, and also the non-official British public, felt a real and lasting enthusiasm. For during eight years of trials, and sorrows, and successes, he presented to our countrymen in India the loftiest type, I had almost said the apotheosis, of the great qualities with which we in distant lands love to associate the name of Englishman.

His masterful character made enemies during his life; his policy towards the Native States raised a tempest of hostile criticism after his death. But during the long period of his actual rule, enmity lay spell-bound by his commanding nobility of soul, criticism was by degrees almost hushed by his splendid successes, and throughout the vast continent, from the Himalayas to Cape Comorin,

spread a universal conviction that there was a veritable king of men in India, and that that king was Dalhousie.

'Those who were most intimate with him,' says the man who knew him best, his private surgeon and honoured friend, Dr. Alexander Grant, 'accorded to his ability and sagacity something scarcely short of absolute worship. Sir James Outram told me that he had had intercourse with the Duke of Wellington, Sir Robert Peel, and other leading statesmen in England, but never felt so awed, so stricken by his own inferiority, as in his interviews with Lord Dalhousie, who had always treated him most kindly.' This, too, in spite of the smallness of his stature, and of the fact that Dalhousie was a much younger man than the veteran soldiers and administrators on whom he so firmly impressed his will. The following description of his appearance when he entered on his duties at Calcutta, I take from Captain Trotter, who apparently derived it from personal communication with Dr. Grant:—

'Youthful looking even for his years, erect in gait, with a slim well-knit figure crowned by a noble, handsome, Titanesque head, lighted up by a pair of large, bright, blue eyes—"really quick, clear, honest eyes"—to the frank courtesy of his manner he added "an air of authority that commanded respect and even awe." . . . His forehead was broad and deep; the nose slightly aquiline, with fine,

clearly chiselled nostrils. He had a shapely and most expressive mouth, with long, thin, flexible lips that played in quick answer to every turn of thought and feeling: now compressed with pain or passing annoyance, anon relaxing into perfect sweetness or overflowing humour. To all this may be added a voice so clear, sweet, and musically intoned, that his visitor found its fascination quite irresistible.'

Such was the brilliant young statesman, as portrayed by a friendly but accurate hand, who at the age of thirty-five entered on the great task of governing India. We shall see him, only a short eight years later, when he laid down his office—*heu! quantum mutatus ab illo*—a worn-out, crippled old man, tottering down the river bank which he had once ascended with so firm a step, and carrying, as he well knew, his death within him. In narrating the incessant work which he did, I shall say little of the strain which that incessant work meant to his mind and body. He himself maintained, and would have desired, a dignified reticence. But in order to understand the man, it is necessary throughout to bear in memory the magnificent youthful activities which he brought to India, and the havoc which India wrought upon them.

His colleagues and subordinates quickly found that there was a new and imperious will at work

in the Government. One day's routine may serve as an example of his life during the next eight years. He rose about six, and began the morning, as he ended the evening, by quietly reading a chapter in the Bible. From six to eight he devoted himself to his office-boxes. At eight he breakfasted, glancing from time to time at the Indian newspapers which were laid out on his table. 'At half-past nine,' writes Captain Trotter, 'he would sit down at his desk, which he never quitted, even while he ate his lunch, before half-past five. Eight hours of continuous brain-work was enough, he would say, for any man, and to this rule he generally adhered. His tastes, especially in the matter of food, were simple. He ate little and drank less at the quiet family dinners which he loved.' He hated the huge banquets which form the ceaseless penance of a working Viceroy's life; but he entertained with the magnificence that became his high position. A morning of discomfort and lassitude, during which he painfully spurred himself up to his accustomed rate of labour, was the price which he almost invariably paid for his night of genial hospitality.

Nothing was allowed to interfere with his daily tale of work—neither weariness, nor heat, nor the fatigues of an Indian march. He rode his journies on a fine light-grey Arab, Maharaja, dressed very simply in riding-gear of native "puttoo" and his head well protected with a white pith helmet

and *pagri.* Whether in camp or at Government House he was to be found for his long allotted hours pen in hand, his papers before him, and his despatch boxes piled up on either side.

'To those around him,' wrote his personal surgeon, Dr. Grant, 'he seemed enamoured of his task. Even in that hot and depressing climate, the intellectual exertion which he liked, brought relief rather than lassitude; for business seemed not only easy, but delightful to him. He went with heart and soul into detail, and to the driest subjects he gave vitality.' 'Everyone who had business with him,' says Sir Richard Temple, 'felt that intercourse to be a pleasure: the harder the affair the greater the satisfaction: so completely trained was his capacity for administration.'

How thoroughly he mastered details, may be realized from a few well-known facts. The Foreign Department in the Government of India is usually reserved for the Governor-General's immediate control. In the modern phraseology of Indian official life, the Viceroy is his own Foreign Minister —that is to say, he has no Member of Council to aid him in that department, as he has in the others, but transacts all business directly with the Foreign Secretary. During Lord Dalhousie's administration the Foreign Department was by far the most important and most severely worked of any of the branches of the Government. For it included not

only the relations of the British power with the independent dominions which Lord Dalhousie conquered, but also with the numerous Native States which Lord Dalhousie mediatised or annexed. Every arrangement, from the plan of a campaign to the hutting and water-filters of the troops, or from the exact wording of a treaty to the ceremonial niceties of a Darbar, was carefully scanned by his own eye, and formed the subject of decisive orders from his own pen.

The mere amount of handwriting which Lord Dalhousie did would now seem an impossibility for a Viceroy of India. On mail days sheet after sheet in his swift delicate characters would pour into the private secretary's room, with a rapidity which taxed to the utmost the powers of that practised copyist. As regards his routine work, the Chief Clerk of the Foreign Department once remarked that 'if Lord Dalhousie had been a writer paid by the sheet, he would have earned a considerable income.' Sir Henry Elliot, his talented Foreign Secretary, the *dulce decus* of the Bengal Civil Service of that period, found so much of his daily labour done for him by the Governor-General, that he had leisure to amass the materials for the eight volumes which now form his memorial for all time. He 'used to say with a pleasant smile that he spent most of his time as Foreign Secretary in pursuing his own historical studies.'

The same omnivorous activity, and it must be added imperious will, characterised Lord Dalhousie's work in every department of the Government. 'There is the master, and we are the little boys under him,' said the Chief Justice when Lord Dalhousie laid down the rules for the remodelled judicial procedure. Lord Dalhousie claimed absolute obedience, not only by virtue of the authority committed to him, but by right of the infinite trouble he took to ascertain the facts of each case, and of the precision of his personal orders upon it. Nor would he be satisfied with any half-hearted compliance. 'In cases where he had a right to be masterful,' wrote Sir Richard Temple, 'he was prompt to vindicate authority; and whenever he received a provocation justly to be resented, he had quite a special faculty for making his displeasure dreaded[1].'

The obedience which Lord Dalhousie enforced from those under him, he loyally yielded to those under whom he himself was placed. 'He was invariably courteous and respectful to the Court of Directors,' says Sir Richard Temple in the work above quoted—a work to which I am under many obligations—, 'while he evidently felt grateful for the support so consistently afforded by them. . . It is creditable to Dalhousie's tact and discretion that

[1] *Men and Events of my Time in India*, by Sir Richard Temple, Bart., p. 124, ed. 1882.

he should, though a very progressive ruler, have retained to the end the confidence of so cautious a body as the Court of Directors.'

He was scrupulously polite to his subordinates; and he knew so well the power of giving pain which dwelt in his words, that he scarcely on any occasion administered a personal rebuke. He reserved his reproofs for writing, toning them down in the solitude of his chamber. But even thus calmed and moderated, a reprimand from Dalhousie cut to the bone. The austere conscientiousness which he enforced from himself in every part of his duty, he demanded from others. 'By those who had served him loyally,' continues Sir Richard Temple, 'he was regarded as a trustworthy friend: but even they looked up to him with a certain awe[1].'

There were those, however, who not only served him loyally and trusted him as a friend, but who toiled for him with enthusiasm, and loved him living or dead from the very bottom of their hearts. A hundred stories are told of the tenderness and gratitude with which he repaid such love. The illness of a trusted subordinate brought always a keener pang to Dalhousie than any sufferings of his own; the death of a valued officer moved the stern master to tears. No letter in the English language breathes a more chivalrous sympathy than that

[1] *Men and Events of my Time in India*, by Sir Richard Temple, Bart., p. 124. ed. 1882.

which he addressed to the wife of Colonel Lawrence on her release from captivity during the Sikh war: nor could any words be better fitted to inspire a man with the strength of a noble appreciation of his own worth, than those with which he comforted John Lawrence on his sick bed. As I shall have to explain clearly the strained relations between Lord Dalhousie and members of the Lawrence family, and not to disguise the somewhat irksome domination which his imperious will laid upon the equally strong natures of the illustrious brethren, it may be well to reproduce these two letters. They will suffice to show how he won the love of those whom he most resolutely controlled.

'Madam,' he wrote in 1849 to the wife of Colonel Lawrence on her release from the Afghans,—'Since I cannot have the pleasure of seeing you here, I am sure you will permit me to take the liberty of addressing to you myself my hearty and cordial congratulations on your being once again in the midst of your family, and of those who have been long watching your fate with painful interest.

'The kindness of your friends has permitted me during that time to see many of your notes which you never meant for any mere official eye; and I trust you will not think I take too great a liberty in saying—for even at the risk of your displeasure *I must say it*—that the perusal of them during the long course of your captivity, showing to me the

gallant heart you kept up under it, the cheery face you put upon it, and the uncomplaining and confiding patience with which you bore it all, has filled me with a respect for your character and admiration for your conduct, which, if I were fully to express them, you would perhaps suspect me of flattery.

'In the hope of one day paying my respects to you in quieter times than the past, and some pleasanter place than Pesháwar, I am, etc., Dalhousie.'

To John Lawrence, during his serious fever in 1850, Lord Dalhousie wrote as follows[1]: 'I have not plagued you with any letter since I heard of your illness. I need not say how deeply and truly I grieved to learn the severe attack you have suffered, and how anxious I shall be to learn again that you are improving during your march, and that you are not foolishly impeding your recovery by again returning to work. I am terrified at the thought of your being compelled to give up work and go home for a time, and I plead with you to spare yourself for a time as earnestly as I would plead to save my own right hand. Two of you have been working hard enough, Heaven knows, for the third: let the other two now take their turn

[1] I quote this letter from Bosworth Smith's *Life of Lord Lawrence*, vol. i, p. 311, ed. 1885: a work to which both in this and other chapters I am much indebted for an insight into Lord Dalhousie's private character and public policy.

of working for you. Keep enough work in your hands to employ you, but don't take so much as to burden you.'

Lord Dalhousie did not keep his expressions of affection only for the sick. The whole body of officers immediately under him knew that the imperious 'little man' watched every incident in their lives with an interest which no pressure of public anxieties could slacken. I cannot refrain from quoting one more letter, a little note which, with the heavy burden of the Burmese War upon him, he found time to write to Major Reynell Taylor, when that officer took furlough to England in 1852. 'My dear Taylor,—The power of encouraging and rewarding such men as yourself is one of the few things which make the labour and anxiety of ruling men in some degree bearable. I have seen your progress with great satisfaction. I earnestly hope you may have future opportunities for gaining distinction which you are so fitted to win. Farewell, my dear Taylor. Always yours sincerely Dalhousie.'

A letter like any of the three preceding became an heirloom in the family of the recipient. It was by such words of noblest sympathy and strong comfort, and genuine warmth of heart, that Lord Dalhousie welded together the ambitions and aspirations of his great lieutenants with his own, and plucked allegiance from the souls of men.

Their allegiance, however, had its sure foundation in their recognition of the fact that Lord Dalhousie owned the truest right to command—the right of personal knowledge gained by personal work. He learned India for himself as no other Governor-General had ever learned it. He deliberately placed the newly conquered Punjab under that most unintelligent of administrative machines, a Board, because he determined that the Board should be his right hand, but that he himself should be its directing intelligence. He succeeded because he laboured by travelling through the Punjab, and by fixing his residence for many months in one of its hill districts, to acquire the personal knowledge which enabled him to control with a well-grounded self-confidence the strong men whom he selected to carry out his views.

The official documents and private papers in which he recorded the results, prove that no detail of administrative importance escaped his keen eye while on his tours through the Punjab: from the constitution, distribution, and commissariat of the troops, in regard to which he showed a more exact knowledge than the fiery old Commander-in-Chief, to the composition of the police, the discipline of the jails, the planting of trees (which led to the true commencement of the Indian Forest Department), the creation of a great system of roads and canals, the provision of schools and hospitals, the

abolition of cruel rites, and the reform of the domestic and marriage customs which lay at the root of infanticide in Northern India. Sailing down the Indus, he circled round by Bombay, the Straits Settlements, and Tenasserim, back to Calcutta in March 1850.

His famous Punjab Minutes have, perhaps, rendered that province a too familiar instance. Let me therefore merely enumerate the journeys by which he brought the newly conquered provinces of Burma under his control. In 1852, during the crisis of the Burmese war, he sailed from Calcutta in defiance of the monsoon, to visit and encourage the army amid the swamps of the Irawadi. Those who know what Rangoon is in August, and what the Bay of Bengal can be during that month, will realize what the journey meant to a man already broken down by the climate and over-work, and subject to constant fever. But however severe his own sufferings, he had abundant energy to see that the troops were clothed, and housed, and fed, in a way which contrasted strongly with their condition during Lord Amherst's Burmese War, in 1825, and which saved thousands of British lives during the campaign.

The blow having been delivered, and Burma annexed in December 1852, Lord Dalhousie set forth in the following February to study for himself the best means of governing it. But instead of

proceeding to the newly conquered provinces, he visited and examined the Burmese territories which had been under our rule during twenty-seven years. He sailed along the coast of Arakan, inspecting the ports and administrative centres, from Chittagong to Akyab and Kyuk-phyu. From that visit many local improvements, and indeed the great modern commerce of Arakan date. But it was not in the improvement of our older Burmese territories that Lord Dalhousie's visit proved most fruitful. He returned to Calcutta with the beginning of the scheme which, during the following summer, he worked up into a complete frame-work of government for British Burma. He united the isolated coast strip that had been conquered in 1826, with the valley of the Irawadi, henceforth the main sphere of British influence, by a military road hewn through the Yoma Mountains.

In December of the same year, 1853, he again sailed for Burma, but this time to the capital of his new southern conquests, with a carefully matured scheme for the administration, which he had elaborated during the interval. On the present occasion he made a thorough inspection of the Irawadi valley to the extreme boundary of our dominions, marched along their frontier, and then, sweeping down again to the coast, visited Bassein, and examined the possible new outlets of commerce.

This visit lasted to the beginning of 1854.

During the following year and a half he allowed the strong man, whom he had chosen for the charge of the united Burmese provinces, to carry out his views. Having thus given time for his system to be brought into working order, he proceeded at the end of 1855 to inspect for himself the results. Once more, now alas the wreck of his former self, he sailed from India to Burma, visiting not only the busy emporium which his energy had created at Rangoon, but also the island of Negrais, and the new harbour that had sprung up near the mouth of the Bassein River, and which still bears his name. If ever a conqueror earned, by personal labour, the right to govern a newly subjected country, and to impose his will upon his subordinates in the execution of the task, it was Lord Dalhousie.

For by this time the cares of empire, and all worldly pomps and successes, had become to him merely a matter of stern duty. The clouds of desolation had during the previous two years fallen heavily upon his soul. Himself 'bowed down and crippled by an exhausting disease,' he had been stripped one by one of the consolations which had cheered him amid his own infirmities and suffering. In the spring of 1852 Lady Dalhousie's health compelled her to leave her husband, to seek a chance of recovery in the hill climate of Ceylon. The following year was the saddest in Lord Dalhousie's life. One of his most trusted lieutenants in the

Punjab, Colonel Mackeson, fell by an Afghan knife. His loss, Dalhousie declared in a General Order, 'would have dimmed a victory.' Two years before, he had mourned the sudden end of his great English Chief, Sir Robert Peel—his stern composure melting into tears at the news. Now, in 1853, he was also to lose his right-hand man in India, Sir Henry Elliot, most accomplished of Foreign Secretaries, and most brilliant and genial of private friends.

But the desolation which fell upon Lord Dalhousie in that year and wrung his heart, was of a more intimate character. Although Lady Dalhousie had improved by her visit to Ceylon in 1852, yet it was found necessary in the following spring that she should again leave India. She started *viâ* the Cape for England, in the hope that the long sea voyage, and the meeting at home with the two daughters for whom she yearned, might enable her to return to Calcutta at the beginning of winter in restored health. The longings of the mother's heart were destined never to be satisfied in this world; nor were the hopes of the husband ever to be fulfilled. Lady Dalhousie died on the homeward voyage, on the 6th of May, 1853.

The terrible task of breaking the news to her husband fell upon his kinsman and Military Secretary, Major James Ramsay. Lord Dalhousie one evening returned from his usual drive on the Cal-

cutta Course; within a few minutes the light of his life had gone out for ever. 'He fell to the ground as if suddenly stricken dead. From that time forth,' says Captain Trotter, 'the sense of his bereavement never left him.' 'For the first two days he shut himself up alone with his grief. Then he wrote a line to Courtenay (his Private Secretary) begging only for "work, work," no matter what kind. For several months he would see no one except on urgent business, and seldom left the room even for a drive.'

Consolation he would none of. Each mail brought letters of tender sympathy: from the greatest Lady of England, whose royal heart has never failed to share the sorrows of those who serve her in distant lands, down through a long succession of illustrious and humbler friends whose knowledge of his strong nature made them recognise the depth of his desolation. It was, however, a touching letter from his eldest daughter, Lady Susan Ramsay, that 'first taught him in his own words that he had "still something left to love."' In December, 1854, this dear daughter, then seventeen years old, joined her father in India. How she laboured to fill the place which was left empty; with what fine womanly tact and girlish brightness she won her way into the darkened chambers of that sad heart; how she shared Dalhousie's public cares, and at length brought a new sunshine into

his private life—is attested by those who had watched around the stricken man, helpless to assuage his great sorrow.

Why lengthen out the story of the remaining years of sickness and toil? In 1853, during his months of desolation, Lord Dalhousie saw his projects for railways and telegraphs for India become accomplished facts. In 1854, he put the corner-stone to the legislative edifice which was to exercise so great an influence upon the destinies of the country. In May, 1854, a year after his wife's death, the new Legislative Council met for the first time; and during the same year the great Despatch was penned by the Secretary of State which laid the foundation of a national system of Indian public instruction.

Before the end of the rains, however, Lord Dalhousie's health was so broken that it seemed impossible for him to continue longer at his work. 'He suppressed,' says Sir Richard Temple, 'as much as possible any manifestation of his distress or suffering; and the public was scarcely aware that his strength and life were gradually but surely ebbing away[1].' A voyage along the Orissa coast recruited his strength for a moment; but his surgeon found it necessary to call into consultation another leading Indian physician. The two advisers

[1] *Men and Events of my Time in India*, p. 124, ed. 1882.

made an earnest representation that his physical condition demanded he should lay down the Governor-Generalship.

Lord Dalhousie might have done so with honour to himself. The splendid conquests of his rule were completed; his beneficent schemes of reform and consolidation had been successfully introduced. Had Lord Dalhousie then sailed from India, he would have left behind him a name second to none in the splendid series of British conquerors and rulers of the East. But the worn-out Proconsul had reason to know that the next twelve months would bring a new and great labour which he did not deem it right for him to decline. The dangerous question of what must be done with Oudh was pressing for decision. The Government in England trusted to Lord Dalhousie, not only to find the true answer to that question, but also to carry out the policy which they might determine to adopt. Lord Dalhousie had promised not to flinch from the task, and well knowing the peril which he ran, refused to quit his post. 'Believing it to be my duty to remain in India during this year,' he deliberately replied in writing to his physicians' protest, 'in fulfilment of my pledge, and trusting in the Providence of God to avert from me those indirect risks against which you have so clearly and faithfully warned me, I have resolved to remain.'

The arrival of his daughter, Lady Susan, at the end of 1854, and the comfort which she brought into his life, alone enabled him to go through the next thirteen months. A tour in Southern India, and a refreshing pause on the Nilgiris, nerved him for his final effort. On the 7th of February, 1856, Oudh was annexed. On the last day of that month Lord Dalhousie resigned his office. 'It is well,' he said to his physician on the 26th, 'that there are only twenty-nine days in this month. I could not have held out two days more.'

'As for my health, Ján Lárin,' he wrote to John Lawrence, 'I am a cripple in every sense.' On the 28th February he presided at Council for the last time, bidding each of his colleagues an affectionate farewell. The touching words of reply, by the Senior Member, reveal the habitual control which Lord Dalhousie so sternly imposed on his haughty temper in dealing with men. Not one angry word, said Mr. Dorin, had ever passed among them in that room. Next day, the 29th Lord Dalhousie went through the formal ceremony of receiving his successor, Lord Canning, at the top of the spacious stairs which lead up to Government House.

The contrast between the two men, once undergraduates together at Christ Church, long dwelt in the memory of the civil and military dignitaries who, according to custom, stood on either side of

the broad stairs to take part in the spectacle. Lord *Canning still young-looking, and a little shy amid the throng of strange faces: Lord Dalhousie lame,* bent with disease, and prematurely aged, but stately and imperial to the end. When the procession reached the Council Chamber, and the new Governor-General was being sworn in, John Lawrence whispered to Dalhousie, and asked him what was his feeling at that moment. 'I wish I were in Canning's place and he in mine,' was the Dalhousie-like reply. 'And then, wouldn't I govern India! But no—I could not wish my worst enemy to be the poor, miserable, broken-down, dying man I am now.'

During the next week Lord Dalhousie rested—if deep and anxious converse with his great lieutenants and the new Governor-General on the pressing needs of India can be called rest. The public, Native and European alike, awakened to the fact that in a few days they were to lose for ever 'the glorious little invalid' who, during eight years of toil and sorrow, had been the foremost man in India. Addresses and deputations from every section of the community poured in upon him. The only day of real repose which he allowed himself was his last Sabbath. As Governor-General, Lord Dalhousie had punctiliously maintained the dignity of the Church of his Sovereign, and regularly attended the Cathedral with the Aide-de-camp on duty. This Sunday he went quietly

to Saint Andrew's Kirk, so weak that he had to be *carried up the staircase to the gallery in a chair*, and worshipped after the graver Scottish manner of his fathers.

The scene on the bank of the Húgli, when he embarked for England, was a memorable and pathetic one. 'The attempted cheers of the well-dressed crowd that saw him totter on his crutches towards the river side faded away into a silence more eloquent than the loudest hurrahs.'

'I am sure,' writes an eye-witness[1], 'that no one who was present on the *Maidan* [the great plain] of Calcutta on the evening when Lord Dalhousie embarked; who saw the whole population moved as one man with a deep sense of regret and admiration, and observed the emotion of the departing statesman under the manifestation of that feeling, would consider him as one incapable of either exciting, or feeling, sympathy. Many who witnessed that triumphant departure had a melancholy foreboding that the curtain was falling on the last act of a great public career; that neither plaudits in India, nor well-merited honours at home could avail to prolong a life almost exhausted in the public service. Others, more sanguine, hoped that he would recover his wasted strength, and enter on a new course of honour and success, as bright and

[1] Sir Charles Jackson in his *Vindication of the Marquis of Dalhousie's Indian Administration*, pp. 178, 179, ed. 1865.

glorious as his Indian career. But no one in that *vast assemblage dreamed that in a few years the* great reputation of their departing Governor would be doubted, sneered at, and assailed.'

Lord Dalhousie allowed himself no false hopes. 'You have made kindly allusion,' he replied to the farewell address from the citizens of Calcutta, 'to the future that may await me. I do not seek to fathom that future. My only ambition long has been to accomplish the task which lay before me here, and to bring it to a close with honour and success. It has been permitted to me to do so. I have played out my part; and while I feel that in any case the principal act in the drama of my life is ended, I shall be well content if the curtain should drop now upon my public course... I am wearied and worn, and have no other thought or wish than to seek the retirement of which I stand in need, and which is all I am now fit for.'

On his voyage home, Lord Dalhousie penned the great Minute, in which he set forth with noble simplicity the principal measures of his administration. Compelled to lie on his back, and unable to use ink, he wrote that masterly review, which makes forty-five printed pages of close folio, for the most part in pencil. It left his strength reduced to a perilously low ebb. The ship's crew had to carry him on shore at Suez. The passage in the jolting van across the desert drained almost

to the last drop his remaining vitality. But after a pause of ten days at Malta, he was able to continue his voyage, in the *Tribune* Frigate, and reached England on the 13th of May, 1856.

A pension of £5000 per annum voted to him on the following day by the East India Company, the gracious message of welcome from his Sovereign, and the cordial expressions of admiration by men of many shades of political opinion, for a time revived the spirits of the worn-out Proconsul. In September, 1856, he lost his faithful friend and physician, Dr. Grant, who accompanied him home, but had now to return to India. 'I felt very sad,' Dalhousie wrote to him in a farewell letter, 'when we parted at the station under the North Bridge [Edinburgh]: and even with the preparatory training, which your absence in the North has given me, I shall long feel strange, ill at ease, and altogether amiss in the absence of the kind and sedulous daily care which I have been long accustomed to receive from you. I thank you a thousand times for it all. My confidence in your judgment and skill was entire and unabated from first to last: and my gratitude for your never-flagging attention to myself, and to that dear suffering companion whom I lost, will remain in memory as long as I have memory left. . . Farewell, and God bless you. Write to me often, and never cease to believe me your sincere friend, Dalhousie.'

The clouds gathered thicker and darker around him. After a cold winter at Dalhousie Castle, he writes despondently to Dr. Grant early in 1857, 'I am weak, incapable of exertion or resolution, tormented with the numbness of my nose and throat, without any appetite—and done.' He thinks of seeking a warmer climate. 'Susan (in whom I place more medical confidence than in anybody since you left me) and I have discussed the subject. . . She and Edith decidedly incline to Malta. . . I believe they are right, and I think we shall end in passing the winter there.'

The terrible news of the Mutiny found the Marquess of Dalhousie too prostrate to take any part in the parliamentary discussions which followed. 'You can well imagine,' he writes to Dr. Grant in India, in July 1857, 'with what deep grief I have heard the tidings which the last mail has brought. In a public and private sense all is bitter. . . I can think of nothing else but this outbreak; and though no alarmist, as you well know, I await with the keenest anxiety the tidings which next mail and successive mails shall bring us. From this side I can tell you nothing but what the journals will tell you better, for I am still closely secluded. . . I am very sad, my dear Grant, at the state of things on your side.'

To the misery of physical prostration, and the bitterness of being unable to aid by his counsel

and experience in the public measures taken to meet the calamity, was super-added the deeper sorrow of knowing that if the military precautions which he had urged as Governor-General had been adopted by the Home Government, the spread of the Mutiny would, humanly speaking, have been impossible. On this point it will be my duty to speak fully and frankly in a later chapter. Meanwhile it only remained for him to suffer in silence, and to bear with fortitude, but without reply, the popular clamour against him for not having provided the very safeguards which he himself had clearly foreseen to be necessary; and of the necessity for which he had solemnly warned the responsible Ministers in England.

'Of course there are plenty who inculpate me,' he wrote in August, 'and although it is very hard to be incapacitated from defence when one believes oneself to be without blame, I believe that I care less for the blame and the defencelessness than for the misfortunes which lead men to blame, and render defence of my administration necessary. In the meantime the rest of mind which I feel to be essential to my progress towards recovery is gone.'

He chafed at the absence of that swift and stern action in India with which he himself would have crushed the disaffection at the outset. 'This last business at Dinapur,' he writes in August, 'exceeds all powers of imagination. General Lloyd, it is

said, put undue faith in the Sepoys. But why was it left to General Lloyd or to General or Mr. Anybody, to order the measures so obviously necessary to safety? . . My whole heart is sick and sore at what I hear; and the mental anxiety and disquietude which are produced by what is going on in the scenes of my services, I am conscious is retarding the course of my progress towards health.'

That progress, alas, was altogether deceptive. A short residence at Malvern in the summer of 1857 enabled him, indeed, for the moment to make a rally. But the calamities of the country for which he had toiled, and the deaths of the loved friends with whom he had laboured, were steadily wearing him out. 'My God! what rending asunder is here of the household which, a few months since, was living so happily together in the Hills!' 'I have not been able to join,' he says, in the public supplications for the deliverance of the English in India, for which he heard the church bells tolling on the 7th October, 1857, 'for I have passed the last two days in bed. But God knows, my dear Grant, I do pray with all my heart for that blessing, without which even the splendid efforts which have been made for the restoration of our fame, by those who have been fighting for it in Hindustan, will have been made in vain.'

The winter of 1857–58, spent at Malta, brought no relief. Amid his private sufferings and public

anxieties he found a moment to tell Dr. Grant of the death of the dog which had been his wife's faithful companion in her long ill-health. 'She lies buried in the garden here, and there are very few human beings whose death would make me so sad as the loss of this dumb old friend has done. You, at least' (Dr. Grant had attended Lady Dalhousie for years) 'will recall a thousand reasons why this should be so—and it is so.' 'My rest is destroyed,' he writes to the same dear friend on one of the last days of 1857, 'my appetite again wholly gone. I loathe the sight of food, and in spite of tonics, and careful treatment, with which I have no fault to find, I am low, languid, sick, deaf, stupid, weak and miserable.' Lord Dalhousie was now a confirmed cripple, able only to move about upon crutches; 'as deaf as the Ochterlony Monument,' he says, 'and as dull as the pulpit in the Old Cathedral.' 'It is just two years to-day,' he wrote in the spring of 1858, 'since I laid down the office of Governor-General; and ill as I then was, upon my word, my dear Grant, I was a better man than I feel myself at this moment.'

He knew full well by this time that there could be but one end to his sufferings. 'Beware, my good friend,' he writes in April 1858, on hearing of Dr. Grant's indisposition, 'how you follow my stupid example, and do not remain in India when your health requires you to leave it—either from a

sense of supposed duty, or from any other motive. I have paid heavily for doing so. . . I should be glad to warn you off a similar fate.'

Lord Dalhousie had most truly given his life to India. He deliberately elected, as we have seen, to finish his task, at the imminent peril of his life, and in spite of the protest of his physicians. He had now to pay the penalty. The curtain must fall upon the two remaining years of his sufferings. They were cheered for a moment by the marriage of his younger daughter, Lady Edith Ramsay, to Sir James Fergusson, Baronet, of Kilkerran, whose public services she shared during thirteen years. But the stricken Governor-General found his great consolation during his remaining painful months on earth, in the tender and unwearied ministrations of his eldest daughter, Lady Susan. 'Now, Brigadier,' he said to his kinsman General Ramsay, after a convulsive seizure; 'now, Brigadier, when I am dead, you must stay here and take care of poor Sue; for she will require it.' In the last wintry days of 1860 they laid him, not yet forty-nine, in the ancient burial-place of the Dalhousies, within his own quiet parish of Cockpen.

CHAPTER III

THE CONQUEST OF THE PUNJAB

LORD DALHOUSIE, the youngest ruler of India since Clive, and with his only administrative experience gained from a few years' work in the English Board of Trade, succeeded a veteran soldier and statesman as Governor-General. On the 12th of January, 1848, Lord Hardinge, the friend of Wellington and one of the heroic figures of the Peninsular War, closed his four years of eventful administration. The old soldier made over India to the young civilian in a state of profound peace. The nearly ten years of warfare which followed the aggression of Lord Auckland upon Afghánistán, had ended in what promised to be a permanent calm[1].

[1] The original and contemporary authority for the events narrated in this chapter down to the taking of Multan, p. 77, is *A Year on the Punjab Frontier, in* 1848-9, by Major Herbert B. Edwardes, C.B., H.E.I.C.S., 2 vols., Bentley, 1851. Major (afterwards Sir Herbert) Edwardes' work is followed by [Sir] Edwin Arnold in his *Marquis of Dalhousie's Administration of British India* (2 vols., Saunders, Otley, & Co., 1862-5), and by most subsequent writers. I have made use of both these works; and of the later biographies of the three Lawrences, and other officers at that time employed in the Punjab.

The first Afghan War, in 1841–42, had cost us five thousand men, sixty thousand camels, twelve millions sterling, and the spectacle of a British Army doomed to death, by the incapacity of its leaders, amid the snows of Afghánistán. The Sind War, which followed as one of the consequences of Lord Auckland's Afghan invasion, had, in 1843, added the Lower Indus Valley to the British dominions, at the expense of British justice and good faith. The first Sikh War, in 1845–46, annexed the eastern districts of the Punjab to the British possessions, and placed the upper plains of the Indus and Five Rivers under a British Protectorate.

Lord Hardinge, on assuming the government of the Sikh territories during the minority of the infant Sikh Sovereign, Dhulip Singh, had partially disbanded the Sikh troops, and materially strengthened our own army. The Sikh troops were cut down from 85,000 men and 350 guns concentrated in a commanding position, to 24,000 men and 50 guns, dispersed over the whole Punjab. Our own army, even after a recent reduction of 50,000 men, was still 70,000 stronger than at the last Indian peace[1].

The permanent strength which Lord Hardinge believed that he had given to the British Army of India was not, however, the strength of additional

[1] These and the foregoing figures I take from Sir Edwin Arnold's *Marquis of Dalhousie's Administration*, vol. i, pp. 54–57, ed. 1862.

numbers alone. It was the strength of improved strategic positions which, he believed, abundantly compensated for the numerical reductions that he ordered on the close of the first Sikh War. Lord Hardinge doubled the garrison of North-Western India. Fifty thousand men with sixty guns commanded the line of the Sutlej. A standing camp of 9000 men held the Punjab capital Lahore. Another great standing camp of equal strength, with infantry, cavalry, artillery complete, lay at Firozpur; ready to be hurled, at a day's notice against an enemy—everything in a state of perfect preparation down to its commissariat carts, transport bullocks, and litters for the wounded or sick.

Lord Hardinge might fairly claim that he had ended the long period of war entailed by the aggressions of Lord Auckland, and the vain-glorious histrionics of Lord Ellenborough: that he had done what human prudence could accomplish to combine effective strength with military retrenchment; and to render the calm of the moment a permanent peace. He did emphatically claim to have done these things. Before sailing from India in January 1848, he assured Lord Dalhousie, his successor, that so far as human foresight could predict, 'it would not be necessary to fire a gun in India for seven years to come[1].'

[1] *Life of Lord Lawrence*, by Bosworth Smith, M.A., vol. i, p. 214, ed. 1885.

As a matter of fact, those seven years were, from the very outset, years of war, and of strain which might at any moment develop into war. The fine old soldier who laid down the office of Governor-General in January 1848, was not accustomed to look very far below the surface of things. Prompt to strike and easy to conciliate, he dealt firmly with the facts as they presented themselves, without caring to penetrate deeply into their causes. If he had had either leisure or inclination for such scrutiny, he would have seen that his rule really marked the close of a worn-out system which had ceased to be possible in India.

That system slowly grew up during the weakness of the British power in the two preceding centuries, and received its complete development from Lord Wellesley at the beginning of the present one. It was a system which enabled the English to exercise a political control, more or less effective according to their own strength at the moment, over the States of India; without burdening themselves with the responsibility for the welfare of the peoples of India. By treaties and alliances, the Native Princes had, one after the other, been brought into subordinate relations to the British Government. Our Government took upon itself the duty of the external defence of the subject princes. We were also practically bound to maintain their dynasties against internal revolt, as long as they

remained loyal to ourselves. English Governors-General were compelled to stand by, and witness the cruel results of rendering an oriental prince independent of his people.

This system had, during Lord Hardinge's administration, produced its mature fruits. In almost every Native State of India, there was a ruler whose family had during two generations been exempted from the necessity of ruling for the benefit of their subjects. In many cases the Chief sank into the depths of a hereditary debauchery. In almost all he could, without fear, indulge in the life-long neglect of his duties, and treat himself, if so inclined, to outbursts of cruelty and oppression.

The British Government had from 1830 to 1847 watched these results with sorrow, not unmingled with shame. It fell to Lord Hardinge to sound the first knell of the system. In the south of India the great Muhammadan Court of the Nizam was fallen into insolvency. During 1843 and several succeeding years, the pay of the troops required by treaty for the security of Haidarábád had to be advanced from the British Treasury. In Central India the great Maráthá Prince of Nágpur made himself notorious for private vices and public oppressions, so flagrant, that it is impossible to read the official reports by our Resident, without a sense of shame that an English representative

had to give the sanction of his presence to such a Court. In the great native kingdom of Northern India, Oudh, matters were advanced a stage farther. As far back as 1837, Lord Auckland saw that the cup of iniquity was there full to the brim, and solemnly reserved the right to assume the management of the misgoverned country. Ten years afterwards, Lord Hardinge, during the last twelve months of his administration, placed the King of Oudh under two years' warning; plainly telling His Majesty that, unless he amended, the British Government would have no option with regard to the performance of its duty.

The truth is that to whatever region of India we look, whether in the South, or in the centre, or in the North, the great Native States were fallen before the end of the first half of this century into a depth of misery and misrule, that imperatively demanded the intervention of the Suzerain power.

The attempt to control the destinies of India, without assuming the direct responsibility for the welfare of the people of India, was not confined, however, to our relations with the Feudatory States. Lord Hardinge also tried the system upon the unsubdued military races of the Punjab. The Sikh Power had performed an important service for the British in India. During our days of weakness in the last century, its bitter religious hatred of the Muhammadans was a source of safety

to ourselves. Under Ranjít Singh, 'the Lion of the Punjab,' the Sikh confederacy stood as a barrier between the invading races of Central Asia, and the new British Empire which was consolidating itself during the first half of the present century in Hindustan. The death of that great ruler let loose the passions and ambitions which his iron hand so firmly held down among his military chiefs; and the Sikh leaders forced a war upon the British in 1845.

After their crushing defeat at Sobráon on the 10th February, 1846, Lord Hardinge was merely acting in accordance with the traditions of Indian policy, in attempting to obtain a control over the Punjab without actually saddling himself with its administration. How that attempt failed, in spite of much excellent work which it accomplished, is told with admirable force and fulness of detail, in the lives of the two great brothers, who, during 1846–47, alternately ruled as Resident at Lahore, Henry and John Lawrence. The Treaty of March, 1846, had, after intrigue, conspiracy, and rebellion, to be drawn tighter by the condemnation of the Prime Minister and paramour of the Queen Mother, and by the Treaty of December in the same year. By this treaty Sir Henry Lawrence, as head of the Council of Regency at Lahore, became the ruler of the Punjab until the child Prince should reach the age of majority.

As a matter of fact he was only the chief figure amid a loosely-subjected crowd of ambitious military nobles. The Sikh leaders regarded the condemnation of the Prime Minister and the forced seclusion of the Queen Mother from public affairs, as a new chance for themselves. The Queen Mother perfectly understood the situation, and went to work with new machinations of amorous and political intrigue, in the hope of deriving her own advantage from the nominal supremacy of the British. When officially rebuked for the open treason talked in her *darbars*, she replied to the Resident with bitter irony; scarcely deigning to use the veil of a Persian idiom to disguise her arrogant claims to the sovereign power.

All these elements of weakness in Lord Hardinge's well-meant arrangements in the Punjab lie open to us now. It is clear that only a spark was wanting to set fire to the combustible materials accumulated at Lahore, and in the other capitals of the Sikh Confederacy. But the system of secrecy in which all official transactions were then shrouded in India, rendered the danger invisible to the public and the Press. 'Everything seems to favour the new ruler,' said one journalist. 'India is in the full enjoyment of a peace which, humanly speaking, there seems nothing to disturb[1].'

[1] *The Morning Herald*, quoted in Sir Edwin Arnold's *Dalhousie's Administration of British India*, vol. i, p. 58, footnote, ed. 1862.

'No Governor-General has ever taken charge of the Government of India under such peculiar and advantageous circumstances,' wrote another and more distinguished editor. 'The youngest ruler who has assumed the responsibilities of this empire, he receives it from his predecessor in a state of tranquillity which has hitherto no parallel in our Indian annals. He arrives at a time when the last obstacle to the complete, and apparently the final, pacification of India has been removed; when the only remaining army which could create alarm has been dissolved; and the peace of the country rests upon the firmest and most permanent basis. The chiefs whose ambition or hostility have been the source of disquietude to his predecessors, have one and all been disarmed[1].'

Exactly three months after these words were written by the leading newspaper of Bengal, a terrible tragedy had taken place 1200 miles off, on the bank of the Indus; a tragedy which, after some of the greatest, and one of the most disastrous, battles in the history of the British army, led within fifteen months to the annexation of the whole Punjab. Lord Hardinge as a sequel to the first Sikh war in 1846 had, as we have seen, placed the Punjab under a regency of Sikh nobles,

[1] *The Friend of India*, 20th January, 1848, quoted in Sir Edwin Arnold's *Dalhousie's Administration of British India*, vol. i, pp. 59–60, footnote, ed. 1862.

controlled by an English Resident at Lahore, during the minority of the infant Prince Dhulip Singh. In the fulfilment of his duty our Resident at Lahore required the powerful Sikh Governor of Múltán to render an account of his stewardship. This potentate, known to history as the Díwán Múlráj, held an almost semi-independent position in the middle valley of the Indus, and carried on an enormous mixed business of merchandise and government at his capital, the ancient river emporium Múltán.

After various delays and makeshifts the Sikh trader-prince preferred, or thought he preferred, to resign, rather than to render up his accounts. His offer was immediately, perhaps too abruptly, accepted by our Resident at Lahore. Two young English officers, Mr. Vans Agnew of the Civil Service and Lieutenant Anderson, were sent to take over the government and fortress of Múltán from Múlráj, and to install the new Sikh Governor appointed by ourselves. On their arrival in April 1848 at Múltán, after Múlráj had submissively given up the fortress on the 19th, and the two young English officers were returning with a slender escort to their camp, a fanatical soldier rushed out of the mob, and stabbed Vans Agnew on his shoulder. Lieutenant Anderson was cut down and the escort bore off the two officers covered with blood to the Idgah—a Muhammadan

festival mosque at some distance from the Fort, but commanded by its guns.

Vans Agnew, while his shoulder was being bandaged, dictated an urgent note to the British Resident at Lahore, 200 miles off, and pencilled another to the Commissioner of Bannu, about half that distance, stating what had happened and begging for immediate help. But next day the guns from the Múl án fort, of which Múlráj re-gained possession, opened on the mosque, where the young officers and their followers had sought shelter. I have spent a day within its riddled walls, and under its shattered dome, and bitterly realized the hopelessness of their defence. When the guns from the fort had done their work, the city rabble rushed in, but paused for a moment at the sight of Vans Agnew sitting quietly on the cot where Anderson lay unable to move, holding his friend's hand and calmly awaiting death. The soldiers and better sort of people stood still, and shrank from taking the lives of defenceless Englishmen. But presently a deformed low caste ran in on the two wounded officers, and hacked off their heads. 'We are not the last of the English,' were Vans Agnew's dying words.

Vans Agnew's letter found Sir Frederick Currie acting as Resident at Lahore for Sir Henry Lawrence who had lately gone to England on sick-furlough. Currie called on the Commander-in-Chief, Lord

Gough, to advance with a British force from the great armed camp at Firozpur, to Múltán. Lord Gough declined, and urged the inexpediency of a general movement of British troops, sixteen marches across 200 miles of burning wastes, in the height of the hot weather. Lord Dalhousie, 1200 miles further off in Calcutta, felt himself constrained to support the decision of his Commander-in-Chief, who knew the local circumstances of the case, and who could judge of them with the authority of being nearer the scene of action.

Meanwhile Vans Agnew's pencilled appeal for help reached Lieutenant Herbert Edwardes in his solitary tent at Dehra-Fateh-Khan on the banks of the Indus [1]. The red bag bore the Persian address for the Commissioner, 'To General Cortland in Bannu, or wherever else he may be.' But the young English subaltern, divining the urgency of the case, tore open the letter. Hastily thrusting aside his Civil work, he made a rush with his ordinary District escort and some local companies for Múltán, eighty miles distant. He had only 400 men upon whom he could really rely. Múlráj met him on the way with 4000 men and 8 heavy guns from the fortress. 'I am like a terrier barking at a tiger,' wrote the young Lieutenant.

[1] The facsimile of this pathetic scrawl and a duplicate of the official letter to Sir Frederick Currie, corrected by Vans Agnew in pencil, are given by Herbert Edwardes in his *Year on the Punjab Frontier*, vol. ii, p. 76, ed. 1851.

But all through the summer heats of 1848 the terrier kept on barking at the tiger. Having summoned to his aid the loyal levies of the Musalman State of Baháwalpur, Edwardes won two pitched battles in June and July against immense odds; his Muhammadan Patháns breaking with yells of hatred through the Infidel Sikh battalions. The English subaltern and his native allies fairly drove Múlráj and his 4000 back, with the loss of eight guns, into Múltán.

It almost seemed as if Lord Gough was justified by the event, in his determination not to subject the British army to the sufferings and losses inseparable from a hot weather campaign. A single English subaltern had driven Múlráj out of the field. The Sikh Queen Mother, also, whose intrigues and vices acted as a perpetual ferment of disloyalty among the Sikh nobles, had been firmly, although respectfully, removed from Lahore to the distant sacred city of Benares. On the 1st of July Lord Gough reviewed with complacency his policy of deliberate inaction.

But before the summer passed he found cause to reconsider his decision. The local rising at Múltán had spread over the Punjab, and the rebellion of the Governor of Múltán had grown into a revolt of the Sikh nation. Meanwhile, Lieutenant Edwardes was urgently begging for help, on however small a scale, if only promptly rendered. 'A few heavy

guns, a mortar battery, sappers and miners, and Major Napier to head them, are all we want,' he wrote, to lay siege to Múltán. In July he fairly cooped up Múlráj in that great warehouse-fortress. But Lord Gough was still calmly planning on the cool heights of Simla a regulation campaign for the winter. 'As if the rebellion,' so runs an indignant letter from Múltán, 'could be put off like a champagne tiffin with a three-cornered note to Múlráj, to name a date more agreeable.'

It could not be put off. Lahore, the capital of the Punjab, was seething with rebellion; the frontier tracts of Hazára were in open revolt. The Afghans entered into an alliance with the Sikhs, and poured through the Khaibar Pass to sweep the English out of the Land of Five Rivers. Sir Frederick Currie, the Resident at Lahore, felt himself compelled, civilian though he was, to despatch on his own authority, and from his own slender battalions, a relief force to Edwardes at Múltán. Then at length Lord Gough, the Commander-in-Chief, realized the situation. To the brigade which Sir Frederick Currie determined to send from Lahore, Lord Gough added a siege-train and column from Firozpur. On the 19th of August the forces met before Múltán, and on the 4th of September the heavy guns arrived, amid the cheers of the British troops.

It is impossible not to feel enthusiasm for the

young lieutenant who, during the long burning months of the hot weather of 1848, had almost single-handed held the field against the revolt, and driven the arch-rebel to the ignominious shelter of his walls. It is difficult not to be carried away by the magnificent verve of the 734 pages, here condensed to less than 12, in which he has rendered immortal the heroic deeds of that summer. It is difficult, also, to refrain from censure of the inability to move which the Commander-in-Chief betrayed during that period, in spite of his two great camps of nine thousand men apiece at Lahore and Firozpur —camps standing in readiness to march at a day's notice. But it is right to state quite frankly that Lieutenant Edwardes underrated, indeed, from first to last failed to perceive, the military difficulties of the situation. It was indeed a blindness glorious to himself, and worth to the British name the keenest eyesight of a dozen elderly generals. Let it suffice for Herbert Edwardes that he, a young subaltern, maintained the prestige of England through the critical months during which the head of the British army in India was unable, or thought he was unable, to place a force in the field.

I have had the advantage of hearing, on this question, the opinion of the greatest engineer officer whom India has in our age produced. Lord Napier —the Major Napier whom Edwardes supposed would suffice with a few heavy guns and some

sappers and miners for the capture of Múltán—told me that the gallant young officer could not have comprehended the nature of the task. The fortifications were of an extent and a strength which demanded a very large force, if they were to be approached without disaster, quite apart from the question of taking them.

The events of the siege themselves furnish a commentary on this view of Lord Napier of Magdala. It was commenced immediately after the arrival of the heavy guns on the 4th of September, 1848. But even with the united British force from Lahore and Firozpur, together with the subsidiary Sikh troops supplied by the Regency under the Raja Sher Singh, it was found impracticable to attempt the place by storm. A trench had to be run to the south-western face of the fort, and scarcely was this accomplished than the defection of Raja Sher Singh and the Sikh subsidiary force which represented the last remnant of loyalty to the British among the Sikh Regency at Lahore, reversed the situation, and turned the besiegers into the besieged. The Sikh subsidiary force supplied to us by the native Regency threw in their lot with Múlráj and the rebels. A Council of War, held by the British General, came to the conclusion that the question before it was no longer the capture of Múltán, but the safety of our own camp.

On the 15th of September, 1848, the siege was

raised, and the British troops were drawn off to a position of safety. Meanwhile the new Governor-General had, from his distant post in Calcutta, watched with profound dissatisfaction the tardiness of the military authorities in the Punjab. During his first months of office he prudently abstained from overruling the local knowledge and long experience of his Commander-in-Chief, Lord Gough. But before the summer was over he determined to act on his own judgment. 'There is no other course open to us,' he wrote to the Secret Committee, 'but to prepare for a general Punjab War, and ultimately to occupy the country.' With swift resolution he ordered an addition of 17,000 men to the army, and hurried up troops to the Punjab from Sind and Bombay. 'If our enemies want war,' said Lord Dalhousie in a speech at a great military ball at Barrackpur on October 5, 1848, a ball which may well compare with the festivities on the eve of Waterloo, 'war they shall have, and with a vengeance.'

The Governor-General promptly started for the British frontier on the Sutlej. Sir Richard Temple describes him as he passed through Agra, 'fresh and youthful for his great office, but vigilant and self-sustained.' In November, 1848, Lord Gough moved out his grand army to the task. Twenty thousand men, and nearly 100 guns swept across the Punjab under his command. His tardiness to start was

equalled by his rashness in the field. The bloody cavalry blunder at Rámnagar was followed by the doubtful engagement of Sadullápur on December 3rd.

The troops from the south were now, however, advancing upon Múltán. The arrival of the Bombay contingent before that city on the 26th December, 1848, increased the forces there, under General Whish, to 17,000 men with sixty-four heavy guns. The siege which had been interrupted for three and a half months, since September 15th, was resumed on the 27th December. After a most gallant defence, an English shell fortunately exploded the powder magazine of the besieged. On the 2nd January, 1849, the city was captured; and on the 22nd, after 40,000 shot and shell had been poured into Múltán from seventy British cannon, the citadel surrendered unconditionally, and Múlráj delivered himself up to the English camp.

The strong fortress-warehouse of the middle Indus was fallen. But nine days before its fall a calamity had happened to Lord Gough's grand army. Of the battle of Chilianwála it need here only be said, that it was an evening battle fought by a brave old man in a passion, and mourned for by the whole British nation. On the news of that fatal 13th of January reaching England, Lord Gough was recalled, and Sir Charles Napier was appointed Commander-in-Chief.

But meanwhile the siege-force at Múltán, having accomplished its work, moved northwards to join the shattered forces of the Commander-in-Chief. Before Sir Charles Napier could arrive, Lord Gough, on the 20th February, 1849, retrieved his reputation, and ended the war by the crowning victory of Gújrát. The British army with 24,000 men and ninety guns there found themselves face to face with the Sikh forces 40,000 strong with sixty cannon—and an open battle-field between the two arrays. Gújrát was essentially a forenoon battle, with the whole day before the combatants to finish their work. It commenced with a magnificent duel of artillery; the British infantry occupying post after post as they were abandoned by the enemy; and the British cavalry breaking up the Sikh masses and scattering them by pursuit. Of the sixty Sikh guns engaged, fifty-three were taken.

Lord Dalhousie resolved to make the victory a final one. 'The war,' he declared, 'must be prosecuted now to the entire defeat and dispersion of all who are in arms against us, whether Sikhs or Afghans.' General Gilbert hurried out with a pursuing force of twelve thousand, horse, foot and artillery, the day after the battle. In the breathless chase which followed across the plains of the Punjab to the frontier mountain-wall, the Sikh military power was destroyed for ever. On the

12th of March, 1849, General Gilbert received the submission of the entire Sikh army at Ráwal Pindi, together with the last forty-one of the 160 Sikh cannon captured by the British during the war. While the Sikh army heaped up their swords and shields and matchlocks in submissive piles, and salamed one by one as they passed disarmed along the British line, their Afghan allies were chased relentlessly westwards, and reached the safety of the Khaibar Pass panting, and barely twenty miles in front of the English hunters. The horsemen of Afghánistán, it was said, 'had ridden down through the hills like lions and ran back into them like dogs.'

The question remained what to do with the Punjab. The victory of Sobráon in 1846 gave to Lord Hardinge the right of conquest: the victory at Gújrát in 1849 compelled Lord Dalhousie to assert that right. Lord Hardinge at the end of the first Punjab war in 1846, tried, as we have seen, an intermediate method of ruling the province by British officers for the benefit of the infant prince. This method had failed. It produced, what many had foreseen it would produce, a period of perpetual intrigue, ending in a general insurrection. Under such a policy, a local spark of treason or revolt might at any moment spread into a general conflagration.

In determining the future arrangements for the

Punjab, Lord Dalhousie had as his advisers the two Lawrences. Sir Henry Lawrence, the former Resident at Lahore, hurried back from his sick-leave in England on the breaking out of the war. He was of opinion that the annexation of the Punjab might perhaps be just, but that it would be inexpedient[1]. His brother John, afterwards Lord Lawrence, who had also acted as Resident, although as much averse in general principle to annexation as Henry, was convinced that, in this case, annexation was not only just, but that its expediency was 'both undeniable and pressing[2].'

Lord Dalhousie, after a full review of the efforts which had been made to convert the Sikh nation into a friendly power without annexation, decided that no course now remained to the British Government but to annex. 'I cordially assented,' he wrote, 'to the policy which determined to avoid the annexation of these territories on a former occasion. I assented to the principle that the Government of India ought not to desire to add further to its territories, and I adhere to that opinion still.' But events stronger than his individual opinion had now convinced Lord Dalhousie that, 'there never will be peace in the Punjab as long as its people are allowed to retain the means and the opportunity of

[1] *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, by Sir Herbert Edwardes and Herman Merivale, vol. ii, p. 129, ed. 1872.

[2] *Idem*, p. 129.

making war. There never can be now any guarantee for the tranquillity of India, until we shall have effected the entire subjection of the Sikh people, and destroyed its power as an independent nation[1].'

These being the stern facts, Lord Dalhousie pointed out the folly of any make-believe system of annexing the Punjab in reality, holding it by means of British troops, and administering it by British Officers, and at the same time professing that we were governing it in the name of a native prince. Under such a system, he declared that 'it would be a mockery to pretend that we have preserved the Punjab as an independent State.' 'By maintaining the pageant of a Throne,' he added, 'we should leave just enough of sovereignty to keep alive among the Sikhs the memory of their nationality, and to serve as a nucleus for constant intrigue. We should have all the labour, all the anxiety, all the responsibility, which would attach to the territories if they were actually made our own; while we should not reap the corresponding benefits of increase of revenue, and acknowledged possession.'

Lord Dalhousie deeply lamented that the neces-

[1] The whole of the great State-paper in which Lord Dalhousie submitted his reasons for the Annexation of the Punjab to the Court of Directors should be attentively studied. The preceding and following few extracts, which are all that space permits of in a small volume like the present, altogether fail to do justice to it. A convenient although not complete reprint is given in Arnold's *Marquis of Dalhousie's Administration*, vol. i, pp. 205–219, ed. 1862.

sity of bringing the Sikh nation under effective control involved the supersession of their boy-Maharaja, Dhulip Singh. But after anxiously considering the necessities of the case, he thus writes: 'When I am fairly convinced that the safety of our own State requires us to enforce subjection of the Sikh nation, I cannot abandon that necessary measure, merely because the effectual subjection of the nation involves in itself the deposition of their Prince. I cannot permit myself to be turned aside from fulfilling the duty which I owe to the security and prosperity of millions of British subjects, by a feeling of misplaced and mistimed compassion for the fate of a child.' The child was amply provided for by a pension of £50,000 a year, and the titular dignity of prince.

'While deeply sensible of the responsibility I have assumed,' continues Lord Dalhousie, 'I have an undoubting conviction of the expediency, the justice, and the necessity of my act. What I have done, I have done with a clear conscience, and in the honest belief that it was imperatively demanded of me by my duty to the State.'

The annexation of the Punjab was deliberately approved of by the Court of Directors, by Parliament, and by the English nation. But perhaps what gave him more pleasure, was the weighty opinion of Lord Hardinge, who, at the end of the first Punjab War in 1846, had inaugurated the

intermediate policy of a regency. 'The energy and turbulent spirit of the Sikhs,' wrote Lord Hardinge to Sir Henry Lawrence, 'are stated by one section (of politicians here) as ground for *not* annexing. In my judgment this is the argument which would dispose me, if I were on the spot, to annex . . . I should be ashamed of myself if I would not depart from a line of policy which was right at the time, because I might be charged with inconsistency[1].' This frank confession of the noble old Governor-General, whose scheme of governing the Punjab without annexation had broken down, must have strengthened the conviction of Sir Henry Lawrence that he did well in withdrawing his resignation of the Residentship of Lahore; a resignation which he placed in Lord Dalhousie's hands when he learned that his views against annexation were overruled, and that the Punjab was to become a British Province[2].

Thus, almost within a year of his arrival in India, the young Governor-General found himself compelled to add a great country to the Empire. Amid his engrossing cares for the welfare of the new territories, he did not forget the couple of shallow graves, hastily dug by alien hands, from whose blood-stained soil had sprung the conquest of

[1] *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii, p. 132, ed. 1872. Lord Hardinge's letter is dated 24th March, 1849.

[2] *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii, p. 134, ed. 1872.

the Punjab. The remains of Vans Agnew and Anderson were reverently removed from their humble resting-place, and laid by the victorious British army on the lofty platform which crowns the fortress of Múltán.

From that historic height, which gives the command of the whole middle valley of the Indus, successive conquerors, Greek, Hindu, Muhammadan, Sikh, British, had proudly looked down: beginning with Alexander the Great, who was wounded in the assault of Múltán, onwards through twenty-two centuries. As I stood beside the massive obelisk which shoots up seventy feet from the tomb of the two young officers, and dominates the plains for twenty miles below, I could not help feeling that it was indeed a noble place of sepulture. All around were the memorials of a long heroic past, while the only sound that floated upwards was the continuous creaking of the Persian wheels in the sugar-cane grounds, drawing water for the peaceful toil of the present.

A beautiful marble tablet . the Calcutta Cathedral bears the following epitaph:—

'Not near this Stone, nor in any consecrated ground, but on the extreme frontier of the British Indian Empire, lie the remains of Patrick Alexander Vans Agnew, of the Bengal Civil Service, and William Anderson, Lieutenant, 1st Bombay Fusilier Regiment, Assistants to the Resident at

Lahore, who being deputed by the Government to relieve, at his own request, Díwán Múlráj, Viceroy of Múltán, of the fortress and authority which he held, were attacked and wounded by the garrison, on the 19th April, 1848; and being treacherously deserted by the Sikh escort, were, on the following day, in flagrant breach of national faith and hospitality, barbarously murdered in the Idgah under the walls of Múltán.

'Thus fell these two young public servants, at the age of 25 and 28 years, full of high hopes, rare talents, and promise of future usefulness. Even in their deaths doing their country honour. Wounded and forsaken, they could offer no resistance, but hand in hand calmly awaited the onset of their assailants.

'Nobly they refused to yield, foretelling the day when thousands of Englishmen should come to avenge their death, and destroy Múlráj, his army and fortress.

'History records how this prediction was fulfilled. Borne to the grave by their victorious brother-soldiers and countrymen, they were buried with military honours, on the summit of the captured citadel, on the 26th January, 184–[1].

'The annexation of the Punjab to the British Empire was the result of the war, of which their assassination was the commencement.'

[1] 1849. Alas for the uncompleted inscriptions of our Indian memorials and tombs!

CHAPTER IV

Consolidation of the Punjab

Lord Dalhousie, having annexed the Punjab, determined to give it a strong administration. The obvious precedent was the military form of government adopted six years previously for the recently conquered province of Sind. He had, moreover, at his right hand, the new Commander-in-Chief, Sir Charles Napier, who, in 1843, introduced that system and was still its firm supporter. But he had also, as his advisers, the influential Civilian Members of his Council, who believed that martial rule is a bad rule for a British Province, and whose ideal of government was a regular Civilian administration.

Lord Dalhousie adopted neither of these opposite systems. He struck out for himself a mixed form of government which should combine military strength with civil justice; and erected an administration composed in equal proportions of trained civilians and military officers. He did so in masterful opposition to his Commander-in-Chief who has left on record that, if he could have had

his way in India, 'No Indian Prince should exist' . . 'and the Indian Army [should be] all in all in the East[1].'

A difficulty more serious than the fiery words of Sir Charles Napier lay, however, in Lord Dalhousie's path. His predecessor, Lord Hardinge, was an old soldier, who gladly made over to others the work of civil administration. Sir Henry Lawrence had completely won Lord Hardinge's confidence, and was uniformly spoken of and written to by him, 'with the tenderness of a brother[2].' Lord Hardinge provided, indeed, for Sir Henry Lawrence's friends and relatives with more than a brother's care. One Lawrence, John, administered the eastern districts of the Punjab annexed at the close of the first Sikh war; another Lawrence, George, held the great western tract of the Punjab, Peshâwar; a third Lawrence, Henry, ruled over the central districts and controlled the whole Punjab, as Resident at Lahore. When Henry Lawrence took temporary rest from his duties, John acted for him as Resident. The administration consisted to a large extent of their friends, and the Lawrence family practically held the patronage of the Punjab, and the fortunes of its officers, in the hollow of their

[1] Quoted from the *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii, p. 133, ed. 1872, and Bosworth Smith's *Life of Lord Lawrence*, vol. i, p. 294, ed. 1855.

[2] *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii, p. 118, ed. 1872.

hands. Happy for England that the three brethren proved worthy of the responsibility thus intrusted to them!

But it was a responsibility which no Governor-General, in the full vigour of his working powers, would deem right to make over to a single family, however distinguished. An officer even of Council rank could declare that, in connection with the Lawrences and Lahore, his own 'convenience is a thing which has never been consulted.' Lord Hardinge, men said, 'had set up a triumvirate of Lawrences' in the Punjab. The old soldier, in the last days of his rule, seems to have been not unconscious of the charge. When Henry Lawrence took sick-leave to England at the end of 1847, Lord Hardinge declined to confirm his brother John as Resident at Lahore, and appointed an experienced officer, Sir Frederick Currie, from Bengal. On hearing of the Sikh rising in the following summer, Henry Lawrence, now Sir Henry, threw up his sick-leave in England, as we have seen, and hastened back to India.

He returned in a very sensitive frame of mind. Honestly believing his presence in the Punjab to be of the highest importance, he made the mistake of supposing himself indispensable to the Government. The Court of Directors had received with official calm his eager offer to start back at once for Lahore. Sir Henry writes that he 'was disap-

pointed' at their thus 'politely ignoring him[1]. Nor was his journey out calculated to smooth his ruffled susceptibilities. Lord Dalhousie had frankly assured him, indeed, that 'my word is passed that, on your return at the end of a year, you shall be replaced at Lahore; and so you shall.' But hearing of some pretty stage effect contemplated at Múltán, in the shape of a personal surrender of the rebel Múlráj to Sir Henry in the hope of favourable conditions on his first arrival, Lord Dalhousie promptly wrote to the returning Resident: 'I have to inform you that I will grant no terms whatever to Múlráj, nor listen to any proposal but unconditional surrender[2].' After a scrupulously fair trial, Múlráj was sentenced to transportation.

Sir Henry did not even yet realize that he was no longer dealing with a Governor-General like Lord Hardinge, with 'something almost feminine in his tenderness of nature[3].' On his arrival at the headquarters of the army, he draughted a Proclamation to the Sikhs under Lord Dalhousie's instructions, but in a very different sense from what Lord Dalhousie had prescribed. Lord Dalhousie replied in a letter which I quote at some length, for it practically laid down the conditions under which alone Sir Henry Lawrence could retain his place in the Punjab.

[1] *Life*, vol. ii, p. 103, ed. 1872.
[2] Bosworth Smith's *Life of Lord Lawrence*, vol. i, p. 233, ed. 1855.
[3] *Life of Sir Henry Lawrence*, vol. ii, p. 118.

'In my conversation with you a few days ago, I took occasion to say to you that my modes of conducting public business in the administration with which I am entrusted, and especially with the confidential servants of the Government, are, to speak with perfect openness, without any reserve, and plainly to tell my mind without disguise or mincing of words. In pursuance of that system I now remark on the Proclamation you have proposed. It is objectionable in matter, because, from the terms in which it is worded, it is calculated to convey to those who are engaged in this shameful war, an expectation of much more favourable terms, much more extended immunity from punishment, than I consider myself justified in granting them. It is objectionable in manner, because (unintentionally, no doubt) its whole tone substitutes you personally, as the Resident at Lahore, for the Government which you represent. It is calculated to raise the inference that a new state of things is arising, that the fact of your arrival with a desire to bring peace to the Punjab is likely to affect the warlike measures of the Government, and that you are come as a peacemaker for the Sikhs, as standing between them and the Government. This cannot be. . . There must be entire identity between the Government and its Agent, whoever he is. . . I can allow nothing to be said or done which should raise the notion that the policy of the Government of India, or its intentions, depend on your presence as Resident in the Punjab, or the presence of Sir F. Currie instead.'

Sir Henry Lawrence painfully accepted the situation thus defined for him. Lord Dalhousie had a perfect appreciation of Sir Henry's great qualities, an admiring sympathy for his chivalrous

character, and a high-minded forbearance, up to the furthest limit that forbearance was safe, towards his failings. He resolved that, so far as in him lay, the Punjab should not lose the services of such a man.

When Sir Henry, on finding his advice against annexation rejected, tendered his resignation, Lord Dalhousie sent his Foreign Secretary to quietly lay before him the considerations, which from Sir Henry's own point of view, should render the step inexpedient and uncalled for. When Sir Henry withdrew his resignation, Lord Dalhousie allowed no recollection of the incident to affect his estimate of the sterling value of his sensitive lieutenant. 'You give and will, I hope, continue to give, me your views frankly,' he said to him on the 13th of February, 1849. 'If we differ, I shall say so; but my saying so ought not to be interpreted to mean want of confidence.'

To outsiders, indeed, it appeared that Lord Dalhousie had allowed himself to fall into the same dependence on the Lawrence family that had marked his predecessor's rule. For each of the three brothers he had a sincere admiration, and each of them he employed in great public trusts. 'The Lawrences have been forced upon Lord Dalhousie,' wrote Sir Charles Napier, putting the shallow opinion of the moment into strong and lasting words. As a matter of historical fact it was

Lord Dalhousie who forced his master-will upon the Lawrences.

The stronger man of the two illustrious brothers went heartily with the Governor-General from the first. When Lord Dalhousie asked him 'What is to be done with the Punjab now?' writes Lord Lawrence's biographer, 'John Lawrence, who knew well that his questioner had made up his mind, at all hazards, ultimately to annex the conquered province, answered with characteristic brevity, "Annex it now[1]."' Henry did not go heartily with the Governor-General either at first or afterwards. 'Had Lawrence been Dalhousie,' says Sir Henry's admiring chronicler, 'he would certainly have rid himself of a right-hand man who thwarted him—not indeed by disobedience, but by opposition of opinion—as did Dalhousie himself.' Lord Dalhousie took a wiser course.

At the outset he plainly, even sternly, told Henry Lawrence on what terms alone Henry Lawrence could continue to serve as his lieutenant in the Punjab. Henry Lawrence decided to serve on those terms. When his opinion against annexation was overruled, Henry Lawrence, after a struggle with himself, accepted the policy of annexation. Throughout his four years of service to Lord Dalhousie in the Punjab, however widely his own views might differ from those of the

[1] Bosworth Smith's *Life of Lord Lawrence*, vol. i, p. 242, ed. 1855.

Governor-General, his action was firmly prescribed by the Governor-General. At the end of those four years, when Lord Dalhousie had to choose between John and Henry Lawrence as his Chief Commissioner in the Punjab, he chose John. But he found an appointment of equal dignity for Henry in an adjoining territory, and made his salary equal to that which he had drawn in the Punjab.

Lord Dalhousie having, in 1849, clearly shown the Lawrences that he intended to govern the Punjab on principles and methods of his own, so arranged the local governing body as to secure that its guidance should remain in his own hands. Instead of appointing one or other of the brethren Chief Commissioner, he constructed them together with a third officer into a Board. The plan seemed to on-lookers particularly unsuitable for the control of a newly conquered province. Sir Charles Napier shot out his bitter word at it. 'Boards rarely have any talent,' he wrote, 'and that of the Punjab offers no exception to the rule.' Less unfriendly critics remarked 'that it was self-condemned from its birth.' To Sir Henry Lawrence's biographer it naturally appeared a 'contrivance calculated only to enhance the ordinary faults of divided councils, and to eventuate in compromises where action was required, in ill concealed differences and final disorganisation.' Lord Dalhousie was, as we shall see, no admirer of Boards, and was perfectly aware of the

weakness of any Board as a controlling power in a newly subjected province. Yet a Board was precisely the instrument he wanted in the Punjab. For he did not intend that the Board should be the controlling power: he had determined to be the controlling power himself.

It was a novel and most difficult experiment in Anglo-Indian rule. The brilliant success which it attained is due primarily to the master-mind of Dalhousie who designed and continuously directed it; in the next place, to the able instruments selected to work it out. The two Lawrences and Mr. Charles Greville Mansel formed the Board, with common responsibility, but each with his own Department. Mr. Mansel, as a trained civilian from a Regulation Province, smoothly and effectively organised the judicial administration of the Punjab. John Lawrence, as a strenuous revenue officer, re-settled the land-tax and fiscal system on a basis at once more favourable to the people and more profitable to the Government. Sir Henry Lawrence, as a soldier-political, was charged more directly with the military defence and our relations towards the lately subdued Chiefs and Sikh fief-holders. He also presided as head of the Board.

Lord Dalhousie did not, however, trust the success of his scheme entirely to the members of the Board—able as they were. He resolved that the administration of the Punjab should be, from

top to bottom, an administration by thoroughly good men working on lines laid down by himself. 'You shall have the best men in India to help you,' he wrote to Sir Henry,—'your brother John to begin with.'

During the two following years—the years which converted the Punjab from a powerful enemy's country into a prosperous British Province—the three members of the Board exactly fulfilled the expectations which Lord Dalhousie had formed of them. Mansel did his work quietly if not very strongly, gave no trouble to the Governor-General, and acted often as mediator, sometimes as peace-maker, between the two other members. John Lawrence, with a wider grasp and swifter hand, frequently took an independent view; but having frankly laid it before Lord Dalhousie, he without a moment's wavering carried out Lord Dalhousie's decision, and made that decision his own. Henry Lawrence, with a more sensitive personality and perhaps a finer genius than his more illustrious brother, could not so subordinate his will to another man even more masterful than himself. He had more than once to be reminded by Lord Dalhousie, in very plain words, that there must be but one ruler of the Punjab, and that that ruler must be the Governor-General, and not Sir Henry Lawrence.

The new Province was promptly divided into convenient districts, each under a carefully-selected

English head with European and native subordinates. A strong local administrative body of fifty-six superior officers, Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners, was thus built up: twenty-nine of them being drawn from the Military and twenty-seven from the Civil Service. Lord Dalhousie resolved, from the outset, to convert the Punjab into a safe British Province, and to make it a source of strength instead of a source of danger. For the first time in the history of India a really effective system of defences was created on the North-Western frontier against the races of Central Asia. A line of forts and cantonments rose along the border, and the whole western side of the Indus was strongly held by connecting military roads.

A wall of steel and stone was thus raised between the British territories and the wild Pathán tribes and Afghánistán. The internal peace of the province was at the same time secured by a military police of horse and foot with a separate detective force, under the British District Magistrates, making a total police force of 11,000 men. The old Village Watch was retained in addition, and its responsibility for tracking criminals from hamlet to hamlet was strictly insisted on. The warlike instincts of the population were repressed by a general disarmament: the Pesháwar valley and the frontier districts being, however, allowed to

retain their weapons. The rest of the Punjab was sternly disarmed, and no fewer than 120,000 matchlocks, swords, daggers, and murderous implements of ancient curious kinds, were delivered up through the village heads and the town police.

The Sikh army was disbanded and scattered. But the best of the soldiery were re-enlisted under the British colours or incorporated into the Punjab military police. The Khálsá, or central governing body of the Sikh confederacy, was completely broken up, and its chiefs and fief-holders were deprived of their military grants of land, and reduced to the position of private persons. In three years after the conquest, the Punjab Board were able to truly report that 'in no part of India had there been more perfect quiet than in the territories lately annexed.'

This great task had not been accomplished without several conflicts between Lord Dalhousie and his advisers and lieutenants. The Punjab with its native states, as now constituted, has an area of 142,499 square miles and a population of 22¾ millions. The territories which Lord Dalhousie annexed in 1849 made up about 73,000 square miles: nearly 1½ times the area of England and Wales. Dalhousie, although he rejected Sir Charles Napier's idea of a military government, was quite willing to accept any features of Sir Charles Napier's system in Sind which seemed

good. It was on Sir Charles' suggestion that the Punjab military police was formed. It consisted of 7000 men in six regiments of foot and twenty-seven troops of horse. But Lord Dalhousie, instead of giving the command of the force to British military officers, as in Sind, placed it under the orders and at the disposal of the District Magistrates.

Lord Dalhousie also gave the control of the Frontier Force to the Civil Government of the Punjab. This force was a creation of his own, based upon an idea of Sir Henry Lawrence, and starting from a nucleus which Sir Henry had formed in 1846. Lord Dalhousie expanded it into a frontier force, always in motion; its sole baggage train being the saddle of the trooper, and the back of the foot-soldier. Behind this living fence of steel Lord Dalhousie massed over 50,000 regular troops as an army of occupation in the Punjab. His masterful arrangements gave umbrage to Sir Charles Napier, who complained that he had no patronage and but little voice in the defence of the Punjab.

But, as usual, Lord Dalhousie's most serious difficulty arose not from the fiery exaggerations of the old Commander-in-Chief, but from the inability of Sir Henry Lawrence to heartily carry out the Governor-General's orders. Lord Dalhousie was not content with disarming the people, he deter-

mined that the Chiefs and Fief-holders of the Punjab should be effectively deprived of the power of doing mischief. Most of these men had been in arms against us; almost all of them held their lands from the previous Sikh Government on condition of rendering military service. From either point of view they had small claims for tenderness on the part of a Power which they had fought to the bitter end, by means of the resources placed by the native government at their disposal. Lord Dalhousie resolved, while liberally rewarding individual cases of loyalty, to destroy the status of the class.

John Lawrence heartily agreed with the Governor-General. Sir Henry Lawrence also accepted the policy laid down, but desired so to modify it in practice as to take the pith out of it. Lord Dalhousie frankly told him that he could not permit this. He would give the revolted Fief-holders 'their lives and their subsistence,' but that was all. 'Nothing,' he said to Sir Henry, 'is granted to them but maintenance. The amount of that is open to discussion, but their property of every kind will be confiscated to the State... In the interim, let them be placed somewhere under surveillance; but attach their property till their destination is decided. If they run away, our contract is void. If they are caught, I will imprison them. And if they raise tumult again I will hang them, as sure as they now live, and I live then.'

If, during the Mutiny of 1857, the Punjab could be denuded of its British troops, and its army set free for the Siege of Delhi and the stamping out of the revolt, it was because the powerful Sikh Chiefs, who had fought so splendidly against us in 1848, had been thus sternly broken up by Dalhousie. If Sir Henry Lawrence's half-and-half policy had been adopted, Lord Dalhousie clearly foresaw that the Punjab under annexation would have been scarcely more secure than the Punjab under the Treaties of 1846—except indeed for the loss of the Sikh artillery. But while Lord Dalhousie insisted upon the absolute dismemberment of the Sikh Confederacy, he was willing to carry it out with the utmost measure of mercy compatible with the permanent safety of the province.

'The arrangements regarding jaghírs [the military fiefs], as lately received from your Lordship,' wrote John Lawrence to the Governor-General, after they had been carried into effect, 'have given much satisfaction, and have exceeded all expectation. A Sikh Sirdar remarked to me that they had got more than Ranjít Singh ever would have given them, and that too free of all service.' I repeat that if the Punjab was both safe and contented during the Mutiny, it was this policy of firmness tempered by consideration, and rigorously enforced by Lord Dalhousie upon Henry Lawrence, as head of the Lahore Board, which rendered it so.

Nor did Dalhousie concern himself less with the revenue and judicial system which his lieutenants established under his orders in the Punjab. Justice under the Sikhs had been a matter of bribery mingled with caprice. The old native judges regarded their petitioners in the same light in which an English barrister views his clients, as a source of honourable emolument. In the criminal administration the great Sikh ruler, Ranjít Singh, had been averse to capital punishment, and substituted for it a regular system of fines and mutilation. Imprisonment seemed to His Highness to be a clumsy and costly device for keeping criminals at the public expense. He adopted in place of it a regular gradation of maiming, from cutting off the nose as a penalty for theft, to chopping off the hands for highway robbery, and ham-stringing for burglary by night. The British Government had to organise the whole system of civil and criminal justice *de novo*.

In the revenue administration the task of reconstruction was even more severe. Ranjít Singh acknowledged only two instruments of government, the soldier and the tax-gatherer. In the last years of his reign he had indeed established a rude form of central audit. How rude the audit was, may be inferred from the fact that the pay-master of the Sikh forces had presented no balance-sheet during the sixteen years before the British annexation.

Indeed, neither Múlráj nor his father seems ever to have rendered accounts with any pretence to completeness for the great province of Múltán. Ranjít Singh, while in full vigour at the head of the Sikh nation, trusted to his memory in the matter of revenue payments, assisted by a notched stick.

But if the public accounts were loosely kept, the public burdens were numerous and severe. Forty-eight taxes had been levied: a long and curious list of imposts, from the land revenue (one half the entire crop, and in some years more) to the transit duties, exacted and re-exacted at every city gate, and paid twelve times over before a bale of goods could pass across the province. Dalhousie's lieutenants reduced them to about half-a-dozen. But an honest system of collection, and an exact audit of public accounts, produced from them a larger revenue than had reached the Sikh exchequer. The land tax of the Punjab was resettled on a fairer basis. Each village and field were surveyed, and every peasant's claim to his holding was scrupulously ascertained. This 'Record of Rights,' forms at once the Magna Charta and Domesday Book of the Punjab. It stands as the beneficent landmark of the commencement of British rule.

The rapid advance to prosperity in the Punjab was due in no small measure to the powerful impulse given to trade and agriculture by roads and irrigation works. Money was advanced to the

villagers to enable them to reclaim the wastes. A system of State forests was introduced under Lord Dalhousie's personal initiation. Old canals were repaired, new canals were vigorously commenced. A single one of these great irrigation works, the Bárí Duáb Canal, now fertilises the country with a network of over twelve hundred miles of main and distributing channels (1882), which have cost one and a half millions sterling, and water annually half a million of acres. While the productive powers of the soil were thus marvellously increased, the Grand Trunk Road was pushed forward across the whole breadth of the Punjab, and served as the main artery for a branching system of highways and communications.

The task of Public Instruction was also undertaken. Before ten years elapsed, schools both on the Western and on the Oriental system of education had been dotted over every District. The people were not slow to feel the quickening of the new moral life thus imparted to the province. At a great public meeting held at the sacred city of Amritsar, native delegates from the Sikh nobility, priesthood and people, solemnly agreed to reduce the heavy wedding expenses, which, by increasing the difficulty of providing for daughters in marriage, had acted as one of the chief causes of female infanticide. Similar meetings assembled in various parts of the Punjab with a view to social

and moral reforms—reforms backed by the resolute will of Lord Dalhousie.

The measures detailed in the preceding pages, and many others which I can barely mention in passing, formed part of a complete scheme of consolidation designed by Lord Dalhousie, and worked out by his lieutenants under his watchful eye. Lord Dalhousie was not content with throwing a paper constitution at the heads of his subordinates. He dealt personally, indeed with his own pen, with each question as it arose: personally inspected each part of the province; and personally resided for many months a year at the comparatively new hill-station of Simla within it. He found the Sikh territories disunited by a confusion of civil and criminal laws, by a confusion of taxation and finance, by a confusion of coinage, by a confusion of languages, and by the absence of roads and means of communication. He bound together those disunited territories into the British Province of the Punjab by uniform systems of civil and criminal justice, by a common system of taxation and finance, by a single coinage, by a recognised language for public business in each of the natural divisions of the country, and by the strong cohesive force of roads and highways.

Whatever might be the constitution of the local Punjab Government, whoever might be the members of the Board, or whether there was a Board at all,

Lord Dalhousie's policy of consolidation brooked neither interruption nor check. At the end of 1850, Mr. Mansel having laid the foundations of the judicial system, was relieved of his difficult intermediate position between his conflicting colleagues, and was promoted to the Residency of Nágpur. Sir Robert Montgomery succeeded him at the Board. After another two years the Board itself was dissolved, and Lord Dalhousie entrusted its management to John Lawrence as Chief Commissioner of the Punjab. But even in the hands of so completely trusted a lieutenant, the mainspring of the Government of India's policy in the Punjab was the Governor-General himself. I cannot do better than to quote, although at some length, the account which Lord Lawrence's biographer gives of his relations to Lord Dalhousie, while Lawrence was Chief Commissioner of the Punjab.

'The Punjab, John Lawrence's charge, was Lord Dalhousie's pet province. It was his own child, his own creation. John Lawrence might be its Chief Commissioner, but woe be to him if he ever forgot that he [Lawrence] was not its supreme ruler! If he ever did forget this, and if, acting on his own responsibility, he invited a friend to serve within its sacred precincts, or became involved in a frontier disturbance beyond them, without first applying to the Governor-General, he too was called to account, and felt what might be the weight of Lord Dalhousie's heel. But here his tact and his loyalty to superior authority came in. His notions of duty to

Government he carried to a degree which one might have expected to find in a disciple of Hobbes, but hardly in a man of such popular sympathies and of such commanding powers as his. It was these notions of public duty which helped him to put up with occasional rebukes from his chief, which, if they had come from any other quarter, would have made him turn and rend his assailant. 'But Lord Dalhousie was much too great a man not to wish his subordinates to speak their minds frankly to him. This John Lawrence always did. There was not a step which Lord Dalhousie took in the Punjab, not an appointment he made, not an expression he dropped, which John Lawrence, if he was unable to approve of it, did not, with all his "heroic simplicity," fasten upon and controvert. This done, if he could not succeed in modifying his chief's views, he thought himself not only at liberty, but bound in honour to carry them out. And it was this mixture of resistance and of submission, of loyalty and of tact, and yet of plainness or even abruptness of speech, which, combined with his other and infinitely greater qualities, exactly suited Lord Dalhousie, and enabled two such master-spirits, if I have read their characters and correspondence aright, to move, in the same sphere, with mutual appreciation, and without coming into anything like dangerous collision [1].'

I have thought it right to set forth the powerful, perhaps at times imperious, personality with which Lord Dalhousie designed and enforced the policy that made the Punjab what it became. He felt himself so strong a master, that he did not fear

[1] Bosworth Smith's *Life of Lord Lawrence*, vol. i, ch. 15, p. 419, ed. 1885.

to choose strong subordinates. Many of his subordinates in the Punjab were so well chosen and themselves so distinguished, all of them played so splendid a part in 1857, and the lives of several of them have been so brilliantly written, while Lord Dalhousie's papers still remain shut up, that we are apt to forget that, from the moment of annexation in 1849 to the hour when Lord Dalhousie laid down his office in 1856, they were in the strictest sense Dalhousie's subordinates, carrying out Dalhousie's policy, under his own vigilant, and sometimes stern, control.

All honour to that noble band of workers! But the day will come when Lord Dalhousie's side of the case will also be laid before the public. It will then be seen, even more clearly than I have in this chapter been permitted to show, that it was not Henry Lawrence, nor even John Lawrence, nor Herbert Edwardes and Nicholson and their gallant brethren in arms, who made the Punjab what it became in 1857,—the saviour province of India,—but the Marquess of Dalhousie.

CHAPTER V

CONQUEST OF LOWER BURMA

BEFORE entering on the narrative of Lord Dalhousie's other great conquest, Burma, I may briefly refer to an intermediate episode. The next frontier annexation made by the new Governor-General, after the Punjab, was a small outlying tract of Sikkim. This was a punitive measure rendered necessary by the treacherous seizure, in 1849, of our frontier political officer, Dr. Campbell, and the distinguished botanist Sir Joseph Hooker, while travelling in Sikkim with the permission of the Raja. A military expedition thus became necessary, and a submontane strip of inconsiderable extent, together with certain hills, was exacted from the Raja by way of punishment and fine.

Lord Dalhousie's third extension of the British frontier belongs to a later period, and was on a more extensive scale. The first Burmese War in 1824–6 had given us, among other territories, the coast strip of Burma on the Eastern shores of the Bay of Bengal. Under the Treaty of Yandabu, which closed that war in 1826, British merchants

had settled at Rangoon, the seaport of the Irawadi. Rangoon, however, together with the Irawadi delta and its upper valley, continued to form the Burmese Empire. The lofty barrier of the Yoma mountains and their outlying spurs separated the British coast strip on the Bay of Bengal from the inner Burmese dominions. A British Resident at the inland Burmese capital of Ava maintained the treaty and protected our frontier.

The bitterest part of the treaty of 1826 to the Burmese Emperor had been this compulsory acceptance of a British Resident at his capital. That Buddhist potentate boasted himself to be 'The Elder Brother of China,' and 'The Lord who is the Greatest of Kings.' He regarded the presence of a barbarian envoy as a personal humiliation, and a pollution to his sacred metropolis. While the prince with whom we had made the treaty remained in power, however, its provisions were fairly carried out. But on a change of dynasty in 1837, the successful usurper killed off the previous reigning family, and by studied insults to the British Resident, drove him from the imperial capital of Ava down to the seaport of Rangoon.

In 1840, the Resident had to be formally withdrawn from the dominions of the Burmese Emperor. A long series of provocations and insolent extortions on our merchants followed; for which the sufferers vainly endeavoured to obtain redress

through the Commissioner of the British coast strip. During twelve years, direct diplomatic relations with Burma remained suspended. At length on the 27th September, 1851, the British merchants at Rangoon, under the recent irritation of two signal outrages, laid their wrongs before the Governor-General of India.

Besides individual acts of oppression, they complained that the Treaty of Yandabu was habitually violated, and 'that now affairs have arrived at such a crisis that, unless protected, your memorialists will be obliged to leave the country, and doing so must sacrifice their property.' 'Neither life nor property is safe, as the Governor' of Rangoon, they declare, 'has publicly stated to his dependents that he has no money to pay them for their services; and has granted to them his permission to rob the inhabitants, and to get money as they best can.' In conclusion, 'That your memorialists are here under the provisions of the Treaty of Yandabu, and beg to state, with all due deference and respect, that they claim to seek your protection.'

Lord Dalhousie was not the man to deny such a claim, based upon treaty-rights, nor would any Governor-General of India be fit for his high office who turned a deaf ear to a memorial of this nature. A naval officer was despatched with three ships to Rangoon to enquire into the truth of the

complaints. His instructions were to observe every form of courteous remonstrance, and only to demand compensation for the ascertained actual losses suffered by the merchants, amounting to about Rs. 9,000; together with the dismissal of the local Burmese Governor of Rangoon.

No redress could be obtained. When the English officer asked for an interview, it was at first refused on the ground that 'the Governor was asleep.' After being kept waiting in the burning sun, the naval envoy urged his studiously moderate requests in vain, and further provocations rendered it clear that the English barbarians would never secure redress except by force of arms. Lord Dalhousie was compelled to accept the only alternative—a Burmese War.

In the conduct of the operations which followed, Lord Dalhousie profited by the lessons taught by the first Burmese War in 1824–6. He realized, first, that the losses incident to a Burmese campaign were due, not so much to the fighting power of the enemy, as to the malaria of the country, and the sickness caused by exposure to sun and rain. In the second place, he clearly perceived that until the Burmese Emperor, in his distant inland capital, was made to feel that the English barbarians had the power to compel redress, no real redress would be given.

To meet the first difficulty Lord Dalhousie

equipped his army in 1852 against the climate, with a foresight which would have saved thousands of lives during the first Burmese War in 1825. 'The care and provision,' wrote General Godwin to whom Lord Dalhousie entrusted the command of the expedition in 1852, 'which has been made to enable us to meet the weather is parental. There are to be bake-houses and a constant supply of fresh meat, hospitals at Amherst to relieve me, and arrangements to carry the sick thither.' Skeleton huts of wood were fitted together on the sea-coast, and a contingent of carpenters marched with the troops to put them up. By a liberal commissariat, Lord Dalhousie found it possible to record at the end of his Governor-Generalship that he had 'abolished the morning dram;' and his arrangements during the Burmese War, personally initiated and directed by himself, form one of the first and most signal triumphs of Indian military sanitation. Lord Dalhousie saw that it was to be a war against climate, and he armed his troops for this conflict with as much care as he equipped them against the enemy.

He grasped the political situation with equal firmness. From the outset he perceived that the Burmese Emperor would not accept the teaching of a few distant defeats on the sea-coast. 'I fear,' he wrote, 'that it must be regarded as probable that operations will not be brought to a termina-

tion, till a campaign shall again have led us to the gates of the capital.' He realized that any backward movement or momentary retreat would be misinterpreted as a sign of weakness, and he laid down the principle that 'with a nation so ridiculously but mischievously self-conceited and arrogant,' whatever was conquered must be annexed. With this end distinctly in view from the beginning, he organised the expedition on a scale to insure such a success as would convince even the blind arrogance of a Burmese Emperor.

At the same time he determined to make the Emperor contribute to the cost of the war, which had been forced on by His Majesty's refusal of redress. Lord Dalhousie accordingly now requested not the mere punishment of a local officer at Rangoon, and compensation to the Rangoon merchants for their actual losses of Rs. 9,000. He demanded that the Emperor should not only disavow the conduct of his Governor at Rangoon, but should himself apologise, receive a British Resident at Rangoon, and pay a war-fine of one million rupees.

The expeditionary force was made up of separate contingents from Calcutta and Madras, with a squadron from Bombay. In Calcutta and Madras there was a repetition, on a smaller scale and for a shorter period, of the same want of capacity in those responsible for placing the troops on the

scene of action, that disgraced the first months of the Punjab revolt in 1849. In Calcutta the military authorities seem at first to have been imperfectly informed. With the exception of six or seven regiments, the Bengal Native Army was enlisted for service in India only. Yet Lord Dalhousie was permitted by his responsible advisers to name a Native regiment for service across the sea in Burma, without due regard to this fact. The men objected, and pleaded the terms of their enlistment. Lord Dalhousie acknowledged the mistake which had been made, and rescinded the order for the 38th Native Infantry to proceed by sea.

In Madras the military difficulty threatened to be a more serious one. Sir Henry Pottinger, piqued at not been taken into consultation about the campaign, refused to embark the Madras troops except upon the personal responsibility of the Governor-General. As a matter of fact the Madras troops were enlisted for general service, and the responsibility for moving them was vested in the Governor-General by Statute. The wounded military vanity of the Governor of Madras was overcome, and indeed he had no alternative but to obey. His objections, however, caused annoyance and delay; and the Madras troops had the vexation of arriving a little after the Bengal contingent at the place of rendezvous.

In April, 1852, the expeditionary force occupied

the mouths of the Irawadi. The successive capture of the weak defences of Martaban, of the almost impregnable temple-fortress of Rangoon, and of the strongly held port of Bassein, placed the whole sea-coast and lower delta of the Irawadi in the hands of the invaders.

Their most brilliant feat of arms, and indeed one of the most splendid achievements of modern warfare, was the storming of Rangoon. As Múltán, the starting-point of Lord Dalhousie's first great annexation in the Punjab, was really an enormous fortified warehouse, so the Rangoon pagoda, which formed the key to his other great annexation in Burma, was not so truly a fort as a great temple-citadel. Standing at the base of that lofty mound of earth-work and solid brick, I could not help repeating to myself the exclamation of Lord Dalhousie on visiting Rangoon at the close of the war—'I cannot imagine, General, how your men ever got in at this place!'

They got in, too, against the overwhelming numbers of the besieged. The Burmese troops held the city and pagoda of Rangoon with 18,000 men; the English could only bring 5,700 to the attack. Among the Burmese were the picked guards known as 'The Immortals of the Golden Country,' whose discipline compelled them to die at their posts. The courage of the ordinary troops was also insured, as the king kept the wives and children of

the married soldiers as hostages, while the bachelors were chained up to the guns and embrasures of the fort.

The attacking column slowly advanced under the blazing sun and amid the crashing shot from the heavy guns of the pagoda. 'Our men are dropping,' an officer exclaimed, 'ten for one here to what we should lose in a storm.' At last they dashed up the steep and narrow stairs, from which the Burmese cannon might have swept them into the air. But their headlong rush, and the fierce cheer with which they came on, seem to have struck terror into the hearts of the defenders. As the storming party broke in at one gate the Burmese garrison fled by an opposite exit, the Immortals in their gilt lacquer accoutrements heading the stampede, without having time to loosen some women and children who had been fastened up among the guns, as pledges for the valour of the defenders.

But even this disastrous lesson could not teach the Burmese authorities wisdom. The fugitive Governor of Rangoon insolently wrote to the English General, advising him 'to retreat while he could.' It became apparent to Lord Dalhousie that even the capture of the whole sea-coast would not avail to bring the Burmese Emperor to reason. He therefore determined to push the war into the interior and again raised his terms. Instead of

bare compensation for the actual losses of the merchants amounting to Rs. 9,000 as at the outset, or a fine of a million of rupees as on the commencement of hostilities, he now demanded a million and a half of rupees, with the cession of the Negrais or Diamond islands, and of the Martaban districts on the sea-board. If these terms were not accepted by the Emperor, Lord Dalhousie plainly warned His Majesty that 'the Burmese forces will be defeated wherever they stand, and the British army will reach the capital.'

The Elder Brother of China, still lulling himself to security amid the flatteries of his women and courtiers, declined to take the chance thus offered. The war had to be carried up the country, at a further outlay in money and at some loss of life from disease. In the autumn of 1852, the city of Prome fell to our arms, and gave us the command of the river approach to the royal capital, Ava. The question then arose whether the hostilities should be carried to the bitter end by advancing on the metropolis. The Court of Directors, as represented by the Secret Committee in London, had declared for this extreme course, in event of the Emperor not having accepted the terms already offered to him. Lord Dalhousie preferred more moderate measures.

'To march to Ava,' he wrote in a private letter, 'will give no peace unless the army remain at

Ava; in other words, unless we absorb the whole Burmese Empire.' With a clear insight as to the ultimate results of the war which he was now ending, Lord Dalhousie added, 'that necessity may come some day. I sincerely hope it will not come in my day.' He accordingly stayed his hand, and as the Emperor still declined to come to terms, Lord Dalhousie, after the final capture of Pegu, closed the war by a Proclamation annexing Lower Burma to the British territories.

This document, dated the 20th December, 1852, broke down the haughty isolation of the Burmese Emperor by the still more haughty fiat of the English Governor-General.

'The Court of Ava,' it declared, 'having refused to make amends for the injuries and insults which British subjects had suffered at the hands of its servants, the Governor-General of India in Council resolved to exact reparation by force of arms.

'The forts and cities upon the coast were forthwith attacked and captured. The Burman forces have been dispersed, wherever they have been met, and the Province of Pegu is now in occupation of British troops.

'The just and moderate demands of the Government of India have been rejected by the king. The ample opportunity that has been afforded him for repairing the injury that was done, has been disregarded; and the timely submission, which alone could have been effectual to prevent the dismemberment of his kingdom, is still withheld.

'Wherefore, in compensation for the past, and for better security in the future, the Governor-General in Council has resolved, and hereby proclaims, that the province of Pegu is now, and shall be henceforth, a portion of the British territories in the East.

'Such Burman troops as may still remain within the Province shall be driven out. Civil government shall immediately be established, and officers shall be appointed to administer the affairs of the several districts. . .

'The Governor-General in Council, having exacted the reparation he deems sufficient, desires no further conquest in Burma, and is willing to consent that hostilities should cease.

'But if the king of Ava shall fail to renew his former relations of friendship with the British Government, and if he shall recklessly seek to dispute its quiet possession of the Province it has now declared to be its own, the Governor-General in Council will again put forth the power he holds, and will visit, with full retribution, aggressions which, if they be persisted in, must, of necessity, lead to the total subversion of the Burman State, and to the ruin and exile of the king and his race.'

Lower Burma thus passed in 1852 under British government. I have narrated the four visits which Lord Dalhousie himself made to the Peninsula, to secure that his policy and system of administration were firmly carried out. The new British Burma was the product of his own personality in a scarcely less degree than the new British Punjab had been three years before. But the

problem of administration was essentially different in the two Provinces. In the Punjab the people had been accustomed to obedience to a ruling class. Lord Dalhousie transferred their allegiance from the native ruling class to the British Government. In this process the previous ruling class of the Punjab disappeared as a military confederacy; but retained their position as an important social factor, intermediate between the masses and the new Ruling Power.

In Burma there was no such ruling class. There were only the King, the people ground to dust beneath him, and the officials who were the instruments of his oppressions. To the officials the people entertained no sentiment of allegiance, nor, indeed, any feeling save one of detestation. The official class in Burma were appointed, dismissed, imprisoned, promoted, mutilated, or beheaded, at the caprice of the Monarch, or as the result of an intrigue in the women's apartments. When, therefore, the English took possession of the sea-coast strip of Burma in 1826, they found nothing like a hereditary ruling class or a native nobility who might act as intermediaries between themselves and their new subjects. Exactly the same difficulty repeated itself on Lord Dalhousie's annexation of Lower Burma, in 1852. Exactly the same problem has been severely testing the British capacity for steady effort in the teeth of slow

results, since the annexation of Upper Burma by Lord Dufferin on the 1st of January, 1886.

The difficulty in Burma was complicated by the fact that the whole population had been bred up, during a long period of native misrule, to look upon disorder as the natural state of society. The Burmese villagers, even when they had themselves settled down into hard-working fathers of families and tillers of the soil, regarded *dakáití* or gang-robbery as a manly sport in which every young Burmese of spirit should, at one time or another, have engaged. This was the deep-rooted popular sentiment which Lord Dalhousie had to encounter in Lower Burma in the years following 1852, precisely as Lord Dufferin has had to encounter it in the years following 1886. Lord Dalhousie accomplished his task not by any sudden magic of transformation, but by constructing a British administrative body strong enough and patient enough to weary out the elements of disorder. But it was only by slow degrees that his able lieutenant, Sir Arthur Phayre, could create a public conviction among the Burmese that, under British Rule, peaceful industry yields an easier livelihood than crime.

Into the splendid results of the administration which Lord Dalhousie then inaugurated in Burma, I am precluded from entering. They are written in large letters in every account which has been

drawn up of the Province. The Gazetteer of Burma loses its character as a dry official record of facts from the magnificent story of progress which it relates. Since annexation by Lord Dalhousie in 1852, the inhabitants of the town of Rangoon have multiplied fifteen-fold. The trade of this sea-port, which four years after annexation barely exceeded two million sterling, had increased by 1883 to thirteen millions. The rural parts have equally prospered. Since 1855, the population of Amherst District has increased four-fold. The trade of the harbour and district of Akyab, annexed in 1826, has multiplied itself nearly three-hundred-fold during the past fifty years.

I have now narrated the wars by which Lord Dalhousie extended the British frontier at the opposite extremities of India. By the annexation of the Punjab, Lower Burma, and the outlying districts of Sikkim, Lord Dalhousie added to the British dominions in India territories equal to nearly twice the area of England and Wales. But the increase of territory was only one of the results, and perhaps not the most important result, of Lord Dalhousie's frontier wars.

By the annexation of the Punjab he threw down the old native breakwater between British India and external attack. He abolished the warlike Sikh power which had formerly stood between us and the races of Central Asia. Since that time

British armies have garrisoned the great dividing line. British India has thus come indirectly into contact with Russia's sphere of activity, and eventually into that costly system of armed neutrality, which constitutes what we are pleased to call the concert of nations in Europe. By the annexation of the submontane tract of Sikkim, Lord Dalhousie brought within the British frontier a territory which, from its capabilities as a tea-growing tract, has given an impulse to a new and an important branch of English enterprise. By the annexation of Lower Burma he placed the rice trade and teak trade of the East in British hands, and converted a vast ruined country into one of the most progressive and most prosperous Provinces of Asia. But here also territorial extension involved an increase of political responsibility. As already mentioned, our connection with Sikkim has led us into not always happy relations with Thibet. Important problems of Indian government, the future of the opium-revenue, the proposed development of trade-routes to the eastward, the control over the south-eastern frontier Hill States, are powerfully influenced by the fact that the extinction of the Burmese Empire has now brought us into contact with China.

CHAPTER VI

ANNEXATION OF HINDU STATES

I HAVE, according to the plan of this little volume as set forth in Chapter I, exhibited Lord Dalhousie's frontier conquests in the form of a consecutive narrative, in order that I may now deal with his internal policy of consolidation without interruption and as a whole. The most conspicuous, although not the most important or most permanent, feature of that policy of consolidation was his treatment of the dependent Native States.

In applying the doctrine of lapse to the Hindu chiefdoms, on default of natural successors or of an heir legally adopted with the sanction of the Ruling Power, Lord Dalhousie merely carried out the declared law of the case, and the deliberately formulated policy of the Government of India, years before he arrived in the country.

In so doing, however, Lord Dalhousie became the unconscious but effective instrument by which the old India of Lord Wellesley at the beginning of the century was prepared for its conversion, in 1858, into the new India of the Queen. The Government in India, the Court of Directors at

home, and that small part of the English people which gave its thoughts to our great Eastern Dependency, had gradually come to the conclusion that the old system of ruling through the make-believe of sham royalties in India could not longer endure. This conviction slowly but inevitably followed from the acceptance by Parliament and the British nation of the principle that India was not to be governed for the profit of the Governors, but for the benefit of the people.

Lord Wellesley (1798–1805) gave, as we have seen, the final development to the system of ruling India by British armies and by British administrators, under the disguise of setting up and maintaining native princes dependent upon us. The result had been two generations of petty despots, secured from the consequences of misrule by British bayonets, and spending their lives in a long listless debauchery, broken by paroxysms of cruelty and oppression. 'If they cannot plunder strangers,' wrote Sir Henry Lawrence, 'they must harry their own people. The rule holds good throughout India.'

The *Times* newspaper thus summed up, in 1853, the results of this system[1]. 'Sovereigns over almost all the sea-coast, we have left many rich Provinces in the interior still under the nominal

[1] Reproduced from Sir Edwin Arnold's *Marquis of Dalhousie's Administration*, vol. ii. pp. 382–84, ed. 1865.

dominion of native rulers. With the exception of the Rajput princes, these potentates are not generally of high rank or remote antiquity. Their possessions rest usually upon a title no better than our own, with this remarkable difference, that though their dominions like ours were won by the sword, that sword unlike ours is drawn to oppress, and not to defend. We have emancipated these pale and ineffectual pageants of royalty from the ordinary fate that awaits on an Oriental despotism.

'The history of Eastern monarchies, like everything else in Asia, is stereotyped and invariable. The founder of the dynasty, a brave soldier, is a desperate intriguer, and expels from the throne the feeble and degenerate scions of a more ancient house. His son may inherit some of the talent of the father; but in two or three generations luxury and indolence do their work, and the feeble inheritors of a great name are dethroned by some new adventurer, destined to bequeath a like misfortune to his degenerate descendants. Thus rebellion and deposition are the correctives of despotism, and thus, through the medium of periodical anarchy and civil war, was secured to the people of the East a recurrence, at fixed intervals, of able and vigorous princes.

'This advantage we have taken away from the inhabitants of the states of India still governed by native princes. It has been well said, that we give

these princes power without responsibility. Our hand of iron maintains them on the throne, despite their imbecility, their vices and their crimes. The result is, in most of the states, a chronic anarchy, under which the revenues of the State are dissipated between the mercenaries of the camp and the minions of the Court. The heavy and arbitrary taxes levied on the miserable raiyats serve only to feed the meanest and most degenerate of mankind... The theory seems in fact admitted, that government is not for the people, but for the king, and that so long as we secure the king his sinecure royalty, we discharge all the duty that we, as sovereigns of India, owe to his subjects, who are virtually ours.'

I have quoted at some length these remarkable words of the *Times* in 1853, because when the *Times* could permit to itself so eloquent a conviction as to the necessity of reform, we may be sure that that necessity was clear and urgent. Lord Dalhousie has been represented by one school of writers as an innovator wno, upon general principles, determined to abolish the old system of ruling India by means of intermediate native princes. By another school he is declared to have been merely the passive instrument of destiny in accomplishing a revolution necessary and inevitable in itself.

As a mattcr of fact Lord Dalhousie was neither a doctrinaire innovator nor a passive instrument in

the hand of fate. He carried out changes in the government of India which had become inevitable, and which must have been carried out, probably at about the same time, even if he had never set foot in India. He carried them out, however, in by no means a passive spirit, but as a ruler deeply convinced of their justice and necessity, and resolved to take every legitimate opportunity that arose for giving them effect. Lord Dalhousie deliberately applied to India the principle which during his early manhood he had seen triumph in England—the principle which Englishmen of every political party now adopt, and which an enlightened conservative like Lord Dalhousie would cordially enforce—the principle that Government is not designed for the profit of princes but for the welfare of the people.

In this noble sense Lord Dalhousie was a doctrinaire. Let there henceforth be no doubt as to his exact views. 'No man,' he declared in an official paper at an early date in his rule[1], 'no man can deprecate more than I do any extension of the frontiers of our territory which can be avoided, or which may not become indispensably necessary for considerations of our own safety, and of the maintenance of the tranquillity of our own Provinces. But I cannot conceive it possible for any one to

[1] Quoted from the Duke of Argyll's celebrated article in the *Edinburgh Review*, 1863 [Reprint, 1865].

dispute the policy of taking advantage of every just opportunity which presents itself for consolidating the territories which already belong to us, by taking possession of States which may lapse in the midst of them; for thus getting rid of those petty intervening principalities which may be made a means of annoyance, but which can never, I venture to think, be a source of strength; for adding to the resources of the public treasury; and for extending the uniform application of our system of government to those whose best interests, we sincerely believe, will be promoted thereby. . . The Government is bound, in duty as well as in policy, to act on every such occasion with the purest integrity and in the most scrupulous good faith. When even a shadow of doubt can be shown, the claim should be at once abandoned.'

In enunciating these principles Lord Dalhousie laid down no new doctrine. He only reiterated the maxim which in the words of a statesman of a different school, the Duke of Argyll, 'had governed the action of the Indian Government in every previous case in which the failure of natural heirs had been made the occasion of appropriating petty states, principalities or jaghírs. It had been explicitly laid down in very similar terms by the Court of Directors nearly twenty years before [1].'

[1] Reprint of the Duke of Argyll's *Edinburgh Review* Articles as *India under Dalhousie and Canning*, p. 28. · Longmans, 1865.

What Lord Dalhousie did was to uniformly apply the principle. The fundamental question was whether we should allow the government of a dependent State, in absence of natural heirs, to pass like mere private property to an adopted son. The Court of Directors had at one time permitted the adoption of a successor in special cases to a principality on failure of natural heirs. It declared however, in 1834, that such an 'indulgence should be the exception, not the rule, and should never be granted but as a special mark of favour and approbation.' As the evils of the old system of government by sham royalties further developed themselves, the Government of India determined in 1841 to enforce a more uniform policy. It unanimously laid down the principle, 'to persevere in the one clear and direct course of abandoning no just and honourable accession of territory or revenue, while all existing claims of right are at the same time scrupulously respected.'

What was this 'right'? By ancient law every Hindu is entitled on failure of male heirs of his body to adopt a son. Such an adoption was necessary for the discharge of the religious ceremonies upon which the welfare of the deceased parent depended in the future state. The adopted son, who is usually, although not necessarily, selected from among the junior relatives of the family, represents the spiritual *persona* of his

adoptive father and succeeds to his property. But this theory did not apply to the political functions of the deceased. Those functions could only pass to an adopted son with the express sanction of the Sovereign Power.

'Are crowns and empire,
The government and safety of mankind,
Trifles of such light moment, to be left
Like some rich toy, a ring, or fancy'd gem,
Like pledge of parting friends? Can kings do thus,
And give away a people for a legacy[1]?'

'When the Hindu is a prince,' writes the most eminent legal authority on the question[2], 'holding his principality subordinate to, or as a gift from, a paramount state, it is a condition of succession to the principality that the adoption be made with the consent of such paramount state. His private property will pass to the adopted son, whether the paramount state has or has not consented to the adoption; but in the absence of such consent, the principality reverts to the paramount state.'

The legal right of the sovereign power to withhold its consent to adoptions for the purpose of transmitting a subordinate principality was acknowledged. But the expediency of so doing was

[1] Rowe's *Lady Jane Grey*, Act III, sc. i.

[2] *A Vindication of Lord Dalhousie's Indian Administration*, by Sir Charles Jackson (formerly Advocate-General of Bengal), p. 5, ed. 1865.

by no means so clear. The actual practice had varied in British India, from Lord Wellesley's system of deliberately raising up and perpetuating intermediate States, to Sir John Malcolm's rough and ready suggestions of using the right to sanction adoptions as a means of raising revenue, and the Court of Directors' more discriminating orders to recognise adoptions only 'as a special mark of favour.'

What Lord Dalhousie did, therefore, was not to invent a new principle of Indian law but to steadily apply an old principle. In so doing he carried out a deliberate decision arrived at seven years before he came to India, by the Governor-General in Council. He perceived the real issue to be, whether it was, or was not, expedient to artificially prolong the system of governing India by irresponsible intermediate princes. For in each case of permitting a subordinate State to devolve by adoption, Lord Dalhousie held that he was artificially prolonging that system, by reconstituting the dependent government or State in new hands. It was not a question of inheritance, but of the expediency of creating afresh an intermediate power between the British Government and the people.

The first case in which this principle came to be applied, shortly after Lord Dalhousie's arrival, was the Native State of Sátára. That Maráthá principality had been constituted by the British Govern-

ment on the general break up of the Maráthá power in 1818, and confirmed to the 'sons and heirs, and successors' of the recipient in 1819. In 1839 the reigning prince was deposed for misconduct by the British Government in the exercise of its Suzerain rights. By the same rights the British Government then set up the brother of the deposed prince on the throne.

The Governor of Bombay pointed out at the time that as the new Raja had no family, there was a distinct prospect that the principality would lapse on his death to the British Government, 'unless,' to use His Excellency's words, 'it should be thought expedient to allow the line of princes to be continued by the Hindu custom of adoption —a question which should be left entirely open for consideration when the event occurs.' In due time the event thus foreseen, when of our own free will we raised the new Raja to the government of Sátára, did occur; and the Raja, whom in 1839 we had placed on the throne, applied for permission to adopt a son. The British Government deliberately withheld the permission; and in the last hours of his life the Raja, in 1848, hastily adopted a son without the consent of the Government. This was the state of things with which Lord Dalhousie, a few months after his arrival in India, found himself called upon to deal.

He and his advisers acknowledged the right of

the adopted child to inherit the treasures and private estate of the deceased Raja. But under the rule laid down by the Government of India seven years previously, in 1841, they could not admit that any valid claim had been created to succeed to the government of Sátára. As to the legal soundness of this view, there can now be no question. The sanction of the Paramount Power was necessary to constitute an adopted son 'an heir' or 'successor' to the government of a subordinate State. That sanction had been withheld, and the adopted child at Sátára never came within the category of 'heirs' so far as the succession to the government of the State was concerned.

'Sir George Clerk, who was then Governor of Bombay, alone, of all the authorities in India,' writes the Duke of Argyll[1], 'was in favour of allowing the succession of the child. But among the reasons urged by this eminent servant of the Company for the advice he gave, there is no trace of several assertions which have since been popularly believed. Sir George Clerk did not deny that adoption with the effect of continuing the Raj required the sanction of the Paramount Power. He did not affirm that this was a mere form, or a matter of course, or that all previous

[1] Reprint of articles in the *Edinburgh Review* of January, 1863, published as *India under Dalhousie and Canning*, pp. 24–25. Longmans, 1865.

precedent and a uniform rule of practice required us to give it. He had himself given peremptory instructions to our Resident at the Court of the Raja that he was "to abstain from recognising any adoption by means of which the childless Raja might desire to perpetuate the sovereignty, assigning to the Raja as his reason for withholding consent the absence of the sanction of the British Government." Sir George Clerk did not confound, as so many have done since, the right of adoption as conveying sovereignty with the right of adoption as conveying property, or as qualifying for the discharge of religious duties. He not only admitted but specially dwelt upon this distinction: "The adoption having taken place according to Hindu usage, there can be no doubt but that such adopted son is the late Raja's legal heir, and should succeed to all his personal property. The question, however, remains whether he is entitled to the Sovereignty of the Sátára Rajas."'

Sir George Clerk, before leaving Bombay, personally answered this question in the affirmative. But the Bombay Council, after full consideration, could not be brought to accept his opinion; and the succeeding Governor of Bombay agreed with his Council against the transfer of the government of Sátára to the adopted child. The Supreme Council of the Governor-General in Calcutta also decided that such an adoption could not carry

with it the political status of the deceased Raja. The Court of Directors in England thus summed up the legal and constitutional bearings of the case. 'We are fully satisfied that by the general law and custom of India, a dependent principality like that of Sátára, cannot pass to an adopted heir without the consent of the Paramount Power; that we are under no pledge, direct or constructive, to give such consent; and that the general interests committed to our charge are best consulted by withholding it.'

Lord Dalhousie in this, as in every subsequent case of lapse, was not content with dealing with the question as merely one of expediency to the British Government. The question before him was whether it was for the good alike of the British rulers and of the people of the Native State, to reconstitute the intermediate government afresh in the hands of the adopted child. The previous Raja of Sátára but one had been an oppressor and was deposed. The brother by whom we superseded him in 1839 governed well. But Lord Dalhousie held that we had no right to subject the people of Sátára to the chances involved by again setting over them an irresponsible ruler.

'In my conscience,' he wrote, 'I believe we should ensure to the population of the State a perpetuity of that just and mild government which they have lately enjoyed; but which they will

hold by a poor and uncertain tenure, indeed, if we resolve now to continue the Raj, and deliver it over to a boy brought up in obscurity, selected for adoption almost by chance, and of whose character and qualities nothing whatever was known by the Raja who adopted him, nothing whatever is known to us.' 'I do not presume to dispute the wisdom of creating the Raj of Sátára,' in 1819, he elsewhere writes. 'I conceive that the same reasons do not prevail for its reconstitution now, when it is again placed by events at our disposal.'

The Court of Directors dealing with the case not as a question of conscience, but as one of law and expediency, thus recorded its final decision. I repeat certain sentences already quoted.

'The result of our deliberation is, that, concurring with you in opinion, we are fully satisfied that, by the general law and custom of India, a dependent principality, like that of Sátára, cannot pass to an adopted heir without the consent of the Paramount Power; that we are under no pledge, direct or constructive to give such consent; and that the general interests committed to our charge are best consulted by withholding it. The pretensions set up in favour of the adopted son of the ex-Raja being wholly untenable, and all claims of collaterals being excluded by the fact that none of them are descended from the person in whose favour the principality was created, the ex-Raja Partáb Singh,

it follows that the territory of Sátára has lapsed by failure of heirs to the Power which bestowed it, and we desire that it be annexed to the British dominions.'

I have dwelt at some length on the annexation of Sátára. For it is not only the leading case, but it illustrates two very important features in the application of the doctrine of lapse. It shows that Lord Dalhousie, three months after his arrival in India, found his responsible advisers almost unanimous as to the necessity of enforcing that doctrine. It also shows that they were thus almost unanimous in a case which had claims to indulgence. The deceased Raja of Sátára was a good ruler. But the Government of India had, previous to Lord Dalhousie's arrival, laid down the principle in 1841, that even in such a favourable case it was inexpedient to reconstitute a subordinate native State by recognising a death-bed adoption of a successor.

The subsequent annexations which took place under Lord Dalhousie's rule must be treated with greater brevity. For they were cases in which no valid claim could be made on the basis of law, nor any special indulgence hoped for on the ground of past good government. One large piece of territory thus brought under direct British rule was Sambalpur—an extensive region of forests, valleys, and mountains on the South-western frontier of Lower Bengal. The childless Chief of this secluded

State had declined to adopt an heir, with the express view that his people might after his death obtain the security of the English administration.

A more historically important case was that of Jhánsí. This State, a fragment of the Maráthá plunder of Northern India, was ceded to the British by the Peshwá in 1817. Its new rulers confirmed, in the same year, the hereditary title of the local Subáhdár, and advanced the holder of that office to the dignity of Raja in 1832. In 1835 the Raja, after a weak and oppressive administration, died childless. The British Government declined to recognise a son whom he had adopted, and out of four claimants selected a great-uncle to succeed to the principality. He in his turn oppressed and misgoverned during a brief rule, and after mortgaging part of his territories for debt, disappeared from the scene, also childless. Again four claimants presented themselves, and again the British Government selected a successor to the State of Jhánsí. Meanwhile, however, the country had fallen into such disorder that the British Government had to assume the direct administration. After establishing order and nursing the finances of the State, the management was restored in 1842, to the Raja whom we had selected. He proved in his later years to be a fair ruler judged by native standards. On his death, in 1853, the British Government had to decide whether, in the absence of a male heir, the

sovereignty of the State should be permitted to pass to an adopted child.

Lord Dalhousie and his advisers decided the question by reference to the misery which the misgovernment of the subordinate native princes had brought upon the people of Jhánsí, and its present Northern district Jaláun, during the previous thirty years. The British Government as the Paramount Power had been responsible for that misgovernment, and yet had been unable to prevent it. The misrule of the two first Rajas, whom we set up in Jhánsí, ruined and drove away the cultivators, and reduced the revenues from £180,000 to £30,000 a year. In Jaláun, where a succession by adoption had been permitted in 1832, Lord Auckland thus described the results in 1840. 'In the course of nine or ten years, the land had been most profusely alienated; debts to the amount of thirty lacs had been contracted; extensive districts had been mortgaged as a security for them; there was neither order nor security in the territory; every village was exposed to the attacks of plunderers; cultivation was deserted; and a country which had been fruitful and prosperous, was from day to day becoming desolate[1].'

'Warned by these results, I hold,' wrote Lord Dalhousie, 'that sound policy combines with duty

[1] Quoted from Sir Charles Jackson's *Vindication of the Marquis of Dalhousie's Indian Administration*, p. 19, ed. 1865.

in urging that the British Government, in the case of Jhánsí, should act upon its right, should refuse to recognise the adoption, and should take possession of Jhánsí as an escheat.' An ample pension was granted to the widow of the late Raja, and the territories were brought under the direct administration of the Government of India.

The same principle of lapse on failure of heirs was applied by Lord Dalhousie to several other dependent States. Jaitpur in Bundelkhand, Baghát a petty hill Chiefdom of thirty-six square miles in the Punjab, Udaipur on the Western frontier of Lower Bengal, and Budáwal in Khándesh, passed under direct British rule from this cause. The fort and military fief of Tanjore were annexed after Lord Dalhousie's departure from India, but practically on the grounds set forth by his government. The estates of one of the Amirs of Sind were forfeited on the discovery of the forgery of the document, under which he had fraudulently obtained possession of certain British districts. Two patches of territory the one in Cachar, the other in Orissa, were also forfeited on account of the misconduct of the ruler, or the persistent practice of human sacrifice. The great case of the Central Provinces will receive separate treatment in the next chapter.

I have thus summarised, as far as it is possible to do so in a single paragraph, what may be termed the miscellaneous annexations made during Lord

Dalhousie's rule. In several cases the annexation was practically unavoidable. But this does not alter the fact that Lord Dalhousie deliberately enforced in dependent Hindu States the principle of lapse upon the failure of male heirs. He found this principle laid down for him alike by the Government of India, and by the Court of Directors in England, before his arrival. He did not extend that principle to the sovereign Native States of India, but strictly confined it to dependent principalities which the British Government had itself created. In their case he held it impolitic, as Lord Hardinge had held it impolitic before him, to create afresh, on failure of male heirs, a subordinate government between the British rulers and the people—a government directly dependent on the British Power for its maintenance, but only indirectly subject to British supervision and control.

In uniformly enforcing this principle, however, Lord Dalhousie unquestionably advanced a step beyond his predecessors. In the time of our weakness in India, during the eighteenth century, British administrators had been too anxious to emerge in safety from the break up of the Mughal Empire, to think about the validity of titles. When the British Power succeeded *de facto* to the Mughal Empire, it slowly but unavoidably began to consider this question. During the first half of the

present century the principle had gradually hardened and set into a constitutional maxim, that the distinction between private property and political functions must be applied to cases of adoption in the dependent States. As to the legal validity of that maxim, and as to its acceptance by previous Governors-General, there can now be no doubt.

But between the acceptance of a constitutional principle and its consistent enforcement, there is usually a period of its uncertain application. That period had extended over many years before Lord Dalhousie's arrival in India. I have carefully read the official correspondence concerning the cases of adoption in Native States, from 1820 downwards. I find that two principles slowly emerge from the conflicting views contained in the records.

The first is that, in regard to the sovereign Native States of India, the British Government held it of the highest political importance that an orderly devolution of the succession should take place on the demise of each Prince. The Government of India accordingly directed its efforts to secure that an heir should be invariably forthcoming, whether by public declaration, or by testamentary provision, or by adoption. This anxiety is conspicuous on the death of Sindhia in 1826[1]: and

[1] *Bengal Political Consultations*, dated 6th October, 1826: Letter from the Deputy-Secretary to the Government of India, to the Assistant-Resident in charge of the Gwalior Residency, par. 2.

again on the serious illness of his successor in 1836[1]. The same anxiety is disclosed to secure a successor, by adoption or otherwise, for the other Hindu Sovereign State of Central India, Indor[2]. Even when no successor was declared or adopted by Holkar, the British authority deemed it politically expedient to at once provide for the devolution of the chiefship; providing, however, 'that the Maharaja who might be selected should be altogether without any pretensions to the Guddee but such as he should derive from being placed there by the British Government[3].' An equal solicitude in regard to secure a successor for a Muhammadan Sovereign State appears in the case of Bhopál, in 1820[4].

But while the policy of the Government of India was consistent in maintaining the succession, by whatever means, in the sovereign Native States, its practice in regard to the dependent Native States had been by no means uniform. As long as the influence of Lord Wellesley continued to be felt, the disposition was to maintain the succession even in the dependent Native States.

[1] Despatch, Political Department, Government of India, to Court of Directors, dated 25th July, 1836, pars. 171, 172.

[2] Despatch, from same to same, dated 22nd December, 1841, par. 94; also Despatch, dated 21st November, 1843, par. 2.

[3] Despatch from the Government of India to the Court of Directors, dated 23rd December, 1844, par. 10.

[4] *Idem*, dated 8th July, 1820, par. 12, and connected correspondence.

But during the second quarter of the century, the British Government gradually determined to enforce its rights as the Suzerain Power in this latter class of cases. It did so, for example, by annexing Kolaba in 1841[1], and Mandavi in 1842[2]. In the cases in which it permitted the succession of a dependent Native State to pass by adoption, it did so for special reasons, or as a mark of special favour or indulgence.

Nothing can be clearer than the words in which the principle was enforced, with reference to dependent Native States. 'To permit the adoption,' writes the Court of Directors when dealing with Kolaba in 1841, 'would therefore be to give up by an act of mere grace, a territory which has undoubtedly lapsed to the British Government as the Paramount Power.'

Once, and so far as I have discovered only once, did the Government of India contemplate the application of this principle to a sovereign Native State. In 1841, the Governor-General in Council, fortified by the principle laid down by the Court of Directors in 1834, unanimously declared their intention, as we have seen, 'to persevere in the one clear and direct course of abandoning no just and

[1] Despatch from the Court of Directors to Our Governor in Council at Bombay, dated 25th May, 1841, par. 9, and subsequent correspondence.

[2] *Idem*, dated 30th December, 1842, par. 2, and Despatch dated 2nd August, 1844, par. 49, etc.

honourable accession of territory or revenue, while all existing claims of right are at the same time scrupulously respected.' In 1844 Lord Hardinge's Government provided for the application of this principle to the sovereign Hindu State of Indor. He distinctly intimated to the newly-appointed Chief, 'that the State is to descend to the heirs male of his body in lawful succession, and to no others, thus precluding the possibility of adoption[1].'

Lord Dalhousie was careful not to apply this principle to sovereign Native States. He restricted it in express words to 'petty intervening principalities.'

When, in 1854, an attempt was made to misrepresent his views on this point, and to give them a wider extension, Lord Dalhousie placed the matter beyond the possibility of doubt, to any one who will take the trouble to read his words. 'The opinion which I gave,' he wrote, 'was restricted wholly to subordinate States, to those dependent principalities which, either as the virtual creation of the British Government, or from their former position, stood in such relation to that Government as to give to it the recognised right of a Paramount Power in all questions of the adoption of an heir to the sovereignty of the State. The opinion I gave referred exclusively to "subordinate States," to a

[1] Despatch from the Government of India to the Court of Directors Political, dated 23rd December, 1844, par. 27.

"dependent principality" like that of Sátára and others that I have named[1].'

Practically Lord Dalhousie classified the Native States of India into two divisions as Sir Charles Metcalfe had done in 1837. First, the Sovereign or quasi-sovereign States dating from the time of the Mughal Empire, or from a still earlier period, or from the period immediately following its disruption. Second, the dependent Native States which we had ourselves created in subordinate relations to the British Government. The first class included not only the great Muhammadan, Rájput, and Maráthá States; but also, in Lord Dalhousie's opinion, States of small area if they had the claim of antiquity in favour of their semi-independence. This is clearly shown in his Minute upon the proposed lapse of Karauli on failure of heirs. That State had been incorporated into the Mughal Empire; it became a tributary State of the Maráthás on the decline of the Mughal Power; it was transferred to us by the Maráthás in 1817. On the failure of direct heirs in 1852, the question was debated whether the State should lapse to the British Government.

Lord Dalhousie himself pointed out as an argu-

[1] Lord Dalhousie's Minute on Nágpur, dated 28th January, 1854. In the printed copies of his *Sátára Minutes*, the word 'independent' unfortunately appeared in one of the most important passages instead of 'dependent.' But if his meaning had ever been doubtful (and the preceding sentence had distinctly referred to 'petty intervening principalities'), Lord Dalhousie now made it clear.

ment against the annexation of Karauli, that 'though not a very old State, still it is a Rájput principality, and, unlike the existing Maráthá and Muhammadan dynasties, has the claim of antiquity in its favour.' 'I presume,' he elsewhere says in the same document, 'that the Government of India would not at any time be disposed to interfere with the customary modes of succession among these old Rájput States[1].' Lord Dalhousie therefore, while of opinion that the arguments seemed 'to preponderate in favour of causing Karauli to lapse,' referred the whole case, for and against, to the Court of Directors, and, on receipt of their somewhat tardy reply, carried out their decision in favour of continuing the State under a Native Chief.'

I have thought it needful to set forth from the original documents, the progress of the Doctrine of Lapse, as applied to dependent Native States in cases of adoption. For the invention of this doctrine was one of the many unfounded charges raised by popular clamour against Lord Dalhousie after the Mutiny. I have now placed beyond question the six following facts.

First, that Lord Dalhousie did not invent the Doctrine of Lapse. Second, that he never interfered with the Hindu right to adopt an heir to inherit the private estate of the deceased, and to perform

[1] Quoted from Sir Charles Jackson's *Vindication of the Marquis of Dalhousie's Indian Administration*, pp. 46, 47, ed. 1865.

the religious ceremonies for his benefit. Third, that, in regard to the succession to the government of dependent Native States, he carried out the established principle, as formulated into a constitutional maxim by successive Governors-General and the Court of Directors before he set foot in India; namely, that the right of adoption, while creating a right to inherit the private property and personal status of the deceased, did not carry with it the right to succeed to his political functions, nor to the government of a dependent State, except by the consent of the Paramount Power. Fourth, that before Lord Dalhousie's arrival, the Government of India had decided 'to persevere in the one clear and direct course,' of withholding its consent in the case of dependent Native States. Fifth, that so far from extending the principle of lapse, Lord Dalhousie refrained from following in the direction indicated by his predecessor Lord Hardinge, of possibly applying the principle to sovereign Native States. Sixth, that what Dalhousie really did was to steadily enforce the principles previously laid down by the Indian Government and the Court of Directors.

It was reserved for the Queen's Government of India to discover a more excellent way. But, as I shall show in my volume on Lord Mayo, this more excellent way was rendered possible by the work done by Dalhousie.

CHAPTER VII

Nágpur. The Karnatic Family. Náná Sáhib Berár

By far the largest accession of territory made during Lord Dalhousie's rule, to the British dominions on the failure of heirs, was the great central tract of India known as Nágpur. This Maráthá principality as now constituted into the Central Provinces, and after various rectifications of frontier, has an area of 113,279 square miles with a population of twelve million souls. The territories annexed by Lord Dalhousie in 1854 make nearly four-fifths of the present Central Provinces.

Their wide-spreading mountains, forests, and plains, had been the seat of powerful dynasties of the aboriginal races, which were crushed by the Maráthás in the last century. The years that followed the final overthrow of the native Gond Rajas by the Maráthás, in 1781, were years of terrible suffering in the Central Provinces. The Maráthás so harried and oppressed the people that the sole refuge of the husbandman was flight. The

cultivators migrated in large numbers to other territories, or sought shelter in the forests. There, the refugees formed themselves into a plundering banditti, who became the terror of Western India, and helped to swell the Pindárí hordes during the first quarter of the present century. The mushroom Maráthá princes of Nágpur came into conflict with the British in 1803, and their power was broken by the Duke of Wellington on the field of Assaye. In 1817, the fourth Raja conspired against the English Government, treacherously attacked our Resident, was defeated, and pardoned. A second series of treacheries, however, brought about his ruin, and compelled him to fly into a life-long exile.

In 1818, the State of Nágpur was thus left without a ruler, at the disposal of the British Government. The Marquis of Hastings reconstituted a portion of it as a subordinate Native State under the nominal rule of an infant descendant of the second Raja, but under the actual administration of an English Resident, Sir Richard Jenkins. The period of minority which followed was long looked back to by the inhabitants as the golden age of Nágpur. After the boy prince attained his majority in 1830, the scene changed. He quickly disclosed a distaste for business and a passion for the lowest forms of debauchery. As he grew older he dissipated the treasure which had been accumu-

lated during his nonage, and recommenced the old Maráthá extortions upon his people.

'Of late years,' wrote our Resident at Nágpur in 1853[1], 'all the anxiety of the Raja and his favourite ministers has been to feed the privy purse by an annual income of two or more lacs of rupees from nuzzurs, fines, bribes, confiscation of property of deceased estates, the composition of public defaulters, or the sale of their effects, and such like sources. The Raja has thus been led on by his avarice to discard all feeling, and to throw himself into the hands of the most unprincipled of his servants, who plundered the country and put justice up to sale for profits, but a slender part of which reached the Raja. He has done many cruel acts, and even carried war into the country of his feudal dependents, on the misrepresentation of those parties gilded by the offer of a nuzzur. Orders of the most contradictory character have been issued at the bid of rival parties from time to time in cases before the Law Courts... All this has been aggravated by the low tone of mind originally belonging to the Raja... Profits and pickings are to be made anyhow. The choicest amusement of the Raja is an auction sale, when some unfortunate widow is ruled not to be entitled to her husband's estate.'

These are the words of the temperate and fair-minded Mansel who mediated between the two Lawrences on the Punjab Board, and who was himself an opponent of annexation. The Raja's sole idea regarding the treaty by which he had been raised to the Chiefship, was that it secured

[1] Mr. Mansel's *Report*, dated 14th December, 1853.

for him the British protection against the vengeance of his subjects. 'Now go away,' he said to a newly-appointed Minister, 'and study the provisions of the treaty, so as to see that they are enforced to protect me in the enjoyment of those pleasures of dancing and singing that I have loved from my boyhood.' In 1853, this contemptible being died, leaving no son or legitimate daughter. Mr. Mansel had, as an advocate of succession by adoption, urged the Raja during his last two years to adopt a child. The Raja had persistently refrained from doing so. 'The silence of the Raja,' wrote Mr. Mansel the Resident, 'was thus a deliberate act of his own.' Indeed Mr. Mansel admitted 'that the Raja possessed no right to transmit his Kingdom but to the heirs male of his body lawfully begotten.' Yet Mr. Mansel thought that it might be well to artificially create an heir, after the Raja's death, by consenting to an adoption by one of his widows. Lord Dalhousie came to the opposite conclusion.

'We set up a Raja at Nágpur,' he wrote [1]. 'We afforded him every advantage a Native Prince could command. His boyhood was trained under our own auspices; an able and respected Princess was his guardian and the Regent of the State. For ten years, while he was yet a youth, we

[1] Papers relating to the Raja of Berár, 1854. Quoted from the Duke of Argyll's *India under Dalhousie and Canning*, pp. 37, 38, ed. 1865.

governed his country for him. We handed it over to him with an excellent system of administration in full and practised operation, with a disciplined and well-paid Army, with a full treasury and a contented people. Yet, after little more than twenty years this Prince, descending to the tomb, has left behind him a character whose record is disgraceful to him alike as a sovereign and as a man. So favoured and so aided, he has, nevertheless, lived and died a seller of justice, a drunkard, and a debauchee.

'What guarantee can the British Government now find for itself, or offer to the people of Nágpur, that another successor will not imitate and emulate this bad example? And if that should be the case, what justification could the Government of India hereafter plead for having neglected to exercise the power which it possessed to avert for ever, from the people of Nágpur, so probable and so grievous an evil?'

In applying the Doctrine of Lapse to the sovereignty of Nágpur, Lord Dalhousie was careful to reserve the jewels and private estate of the Raja for the benefit of his family. The widowed Ránís tried to secrete a large portion of the effects, and to secure them for their personal use. Their opposition, and the measures necessary for overcoming it and realizing the property, afforded a pretext for another of the false charges afterwards brought against Lord Dalhousie. The Court of Directors had declared the possessions of the late Raja (purchased by him out of the revenue of State), to be 'fairly at the disposal of the Government.' Lord

Dalhousie, always tender to private rights, generously took upon himself to differ from this view, so far as to secure those possessions for the benefit of the Raja's kindred. 'I would therefore propose[1],' he wrote, 'that jewels and furniture, and other personal property suitable to their rank having been allotted to the Ránís, the value of the rest of the jewels, etc., should be realized, and that the proceeds should be constituted a fund for the benefit of the Bhonsla family.'

A sum of £200,000 was thus realized as a 'Bhonsla Fund,' after payment of the debts of the household; and pensions amounting to £78,700 (eventually to £98,200) a year, were assigned to the Raja's widows, connections and dependents. The transaction was carried out with great forbearance by the British Commissioner, under the strictest orders from Lord Dalhousie to treat the widows, whatever provocations they might offer, with 'the courtesy due to their rank, their sex, and their changed condition.' Yet it was this transaction, expressly designed by Lord Dalhousie for the benefit of the Raja's family, which was afterwards distorted in England into The Spoliation of the Nágpur Palace.

It requires an effort of imagination to realize that such misrepresentation was possible in regard to a public transaction in India in the middle of

[1] Lord Dalhousie's Minute of the 10th June, 1854.

the present century. But the popular ignorance respecting India under the Company was so dense that any romance could be safely hazarded. For although a denial might be given to it, the public only shrugged its shoulders, and felt that there was another Indian lie afloat, without being able to determine on which side was the truth. An Indian debate in Parliament often resolved itself into a series of contradictory statements. Even in respect to what we now consider as elementary questions of statistics, widely varying opinions were publicly maintained. It must be remembered that the first general census of India was not taken until 1871, almost a quarter of a century after the Company's downfall. That enumeration disclosed the previous official estimates to be erroneous as regards the Lieutenant-Governorship of Bengal alone by 25,000,000 of souls.

No authoritative work existed, to which either the public or the administrative body could refer, for the essential data concerning the princes or people of India. Districts now within half a day's railway journey of the capital were spoken of in the *Calcutta Review*, with more truth than we can now believe possible, as 'unexplored.' The *Revue des Deux Mondes*, in the height of its fame and notwithstanding its efforts at accuracy, could publish misstatements regarding India which would now simply raise a laugh, but for whose contradiction

and exposure no materials were then available. Famines, agrarian agitations, tribal or sectarian movements, in short, all the less common but inevitable incidents of Indian rule, were wont to take the Government not less than the public by surprise. The actual revenues and administration of even a British District were official secrets into which no outsider could penetrate.

The Government of India's relations with its Feudatory States were shrouded in a still deeper mystery. It was not until four years after the East India Company ceased to exist, that anything approaching to an accurate and complete collection of its treaties and engagements with the Native States was rendered accessible to the English public. When a feudatory prince felt himself aggrieved, he sent home a confidential agent laden with uncut gems and bags of rupees, to stir up an agitation in London. If he was a very great prince, and thought it worth his while, he could always secure the services of one of the many English malcontents who had their own grievances against the Company.

Half the lies disseminated in England about India, from the time of Warren Hastings downward, would now be exposed in a moment by a reference to Aitchison's *Treaties* and *The Imperial Gazetteer*. These works, at once complete, authoritative, and available to the public, were not produced until

after the Company's fall. The result was that, on more than one occasion, the reputation of its greatest officers became the sport of popular clamour; and that the Company itself, in its supreme moment, tried vainly to defend itself by eloquent asseveration, rather than by an array of ascertained and publicly acknowledged facts.

The misrepresentations that were successfully set afloat regarding Lord Dalhousie, when a victim for the Mutiny was demanded, form a striking illustration of this. The lie got the start, and before it could be overtaken and throttled by the truth, it had found its way into the permanent literature of the time. Even works of serious history, with good claims on our respect, still reproduce some of the foolish flying falsehoods of that day. I have shown how the generous measures taken by Lord Dalhousie to secure a fund for the Bhonsla family figured in England as The Spoliation of the Nágpur Palace. An even more curious misrepresentation still survives regarding Lord Dalhousie's dealings with the titular princes of the Karnatic. The Treaty of 1801 granted certain dignities and emoluments, personally, to the Nawáb of the Karnatic, who at that time ceased to be a political power in India. His son was allowed to succeed him for specific reasons in 1819, but was distinctly informed that the treaty had not made his rank or dignity hereditary in his

family[1]. He in turn died in 1825, and his son was again permitted to succeed. This third Nawáb, after a disgraceful life, to use Sir Edwin Arnold's words, 'died of dancing girls and ennui in October, 1855,' leaving no child. The local Government of Madras declared it impolitic to artificially create a successor. The pension to the preceding Nawábs had been a personal grant, and Lord Harris, the Governor of Madras, thus summed up the evils of continuing a state of things that had grown into a public scandal.

'First, on the general principle that the semblance of royalty without any of the power is a mockery of authority, which must be pernicious. Second, because though there is virtually no divided rule or coordinate authority in the government of the country, for these points were finally settled by the Treaty of 1801, yet some appearance of so baneful a system is still kept up by the continuance of a *quasi* royal family and court.' Third, because the said family claimed exemption from our courts and were 'not amenable to the law.' Fourth, because the pageant of such a court, 'may at any time become a nucleus for sedition and agitation.' Fifth, because that court itself had become a sink of iniquity.

[1] Sir Charles Aitchison's *Collection of Treaties, Engagements, and Sunnuds relating to India and neighbouring countries*, vol. v, p. 297, ed. 1876.

Will it be believed that these words of Lord Harris, the Governor of Madras, were quoted in England as written by 'Lord Dalhousie's own hand'? Or that the very clause in the treaty with the Nawáb of 1801, which declared the allowance to be 'appropriated for the maintenance of the said Nawáb,' is still quoted in history as showing that the allowance was '*for ever* appropriated for the support of the dignity of the Nawábship'? I reproduce the italics as I find them! Two examples, like The Spoliation of the Nágpur Palace, and The Plunder of the Karnatic Family, will probably be now regarded as sufficient specimens of the misrepresentations, by which popular clamour embittered the last days of the great Pro-consul, who had given up his life to India.

The decision of the Government of India regarding the Karnatic family was thus summed up by Lord Dalhousie. 'I entirely agree with Lord Harris, and with the members of the Government of Fort St. George, in holding that the treaty of 1801 confers no right of hereditary succession. It is a purely personal treaty. . . There is no mention of heirs and successors in any part of the treaty, and no grant of anything is made by it to any one except to the Nawáb Azím-ul-Dowlah himself.' Elsewhere, 'As the treaty by which the *Masnad* of the Karnatic was conferred on His Highness's predecessors was exclusively a personal one; as the

Nawáb had left no male heir; and as both he and his family had disreputably abused the dignity of their position, and the large share of public revenue which had been allotted to them, the Court of Directors has been advised to place the title of Nawáb in abeyance, granting fitting pensions to the several members of the Karnatic family.'

'The family,' writes Sir Charles Aitchison whose impartiality has always been beyond suspicion, 'was liberally provided for; a pension of a lakh and a half of rupees (£15,000) and the rank of the first native nobleman of Madras being assigned to Azím Jáh,' the uncle of the deceased childless Nawáb[1]. His pension was afterwards consolidated with the allowances to other members and dependents of the family, and fixed at £30,000 a year. The debts of the family amounting to £420,000 have also been paid off by the British Government.

Another great pension lapsed by the death of the annuitant during Lord Dalhousie's rule. Some excuse may perhaps be pleaded for the misconceptions regarding the case of the Karnatic family, although a careful study of the 'Karnatic Papers,' printed by order of the House of Commons in 1860, might have avoided them. But it is difficult to find any ground for the charge which Mr. Kaye brought

[1] Aitchison's *Treaties*, &c., vol. v, p. 298, ed. 1876.

in 1865 against Lord Dalhousie, for 'harshness' towards the man afterwards known as the infamous Náná Sáhib[1]. As this charge, however, is still occasionally repeated, and as it has even been suggested that Lord Dalhousie was to some extent responsible for the Mutiny of 1857, in consequence of his action towards Náná Sáhib in 1851, I must briefly state the facts.

In 1818, the Peshwá of the Maráthás, completely beaten in the field, threw himself on the generosity of the British. Sir John Malcolm, then the Governor-General's Agent in the Deccan, assured him of his protection, and engaged that he should receive an allowance of £80,000 a year for his support. The Governor-General, Lord Hastings, thought the arrangement too liberal, but would not go back from it; especially as Sir John Malcolm argued that even a short continuance of the war, 'would have cost more than the value of the life pension granted to Bájí Ráo[2].' These distinct words of General Malcolm, who conducted the business, show that the allowance was expressly intended as a 'life pension.' Indeed there could not be the slightest pretension that it was ever

[1] *A History of the Sepoy War in India*, by John William Kaye, vol. i, p. 103, ed. 1865.

[2] This letter, dated 19th June, 1818, explaining *ab initio* the purely life interest conveyed by the pension. was known to Mr. Kaye, and is quoted by him in his *Life of Sir John Malcolm*, vol. ii, p. 259. Indeed Mr. Kaye himself speaks in that work of Bájí Ráo as 'an annuitant.'

anything more than a personal annuity; and from first to last all mention of heirs is carefully excluded[1]. The records show that the ex-Peshwá, Bájí Ráo, was well aware of this.

Bájí Ráo lived until 1851, leaving to his adopted son, Náná Sáhib, an immense fortune admitted to amount to £280,000, and believed by the Government of the North-western Provinces to greatly exceed that sum. The Government of India at once acknowledged the adopted son's title to this splendid heritage, and out of its own beneficence added to it the Jághír, or grant of land, on which his father had resided in the North-western Provinces. But the pension, paid out of the taxpayers' pockets, lapsed upon the death of the annuitant. In these arrangements Dalhousie carried out the views of the Local Government of the North-western Provinces. The Secretary to the Government of India thus summed up the matter: 'For thirty-three years the Peshwá received an annual clear stipend of £80,000, besides the proceeds of the Jághír. In that time he received the enormous sum of more than two millions and a half sterling. He had no charges to maintain, he has left no sons of his own, and has bequeathed property to the amount of twenty-eight lacs to his family. Those who remain have no claim whatever on the consideration of the Government.

[1] Aitchison's *Treaties and Engagements*, vol. v, p. 73, ed. 1876.

Neither have they any claim on its charity, because the income left to them is amply sufficient.'

The Chiefs not only oppressed their subjects, but many of them were sunk in debt and bankruptcy. By the middle of the century the end of the old system had obviously come: and it must have come whoever might have then been at the head of the British Government. The great Muhammadan State of Southern India affords a striking example of the miseries to both the Prince and the people involved by the pecuniary embarrassments of a native Court. In 1799, the Nizám had been permitted to participate largely in the division of territory consequent upon the death of Tipú Súltán, and the downfall of Seringapatam. By the treaty of 1800, the Nizám agreed to furnish to us in time of war 6,000 infantry and 9000 cavalry; and to support us in the field with the whole force of his dominions. The troops thus supplied proved very inefficient in the first Maráthá War, and various schemes were proposed from time to time for their reform with little success. Eventually, after a mutiny in 1813, new battalions were raised, who were armed, clothed, and equipped as the Company's troops, but paid from the Nizám's treasury in fulfilment of the treaty.

In course of time the Nizáms, like other of the native Princes, felt the deteriorating influence of

absolute power, when divested of the responsibility to their subjects by which alone such power is, in the East, tempered and controlled. Personal indulgence and public indebtedness sum up the history of their Court during many years. The Nizám at length found himself unable to pay the contingent of troops which he was bound by treaty to maintain, and the British Treasury had to make advances for the purpose. In 1843, His Highness was distinctly informed that in event of further advances becoming necessary, the British Government would demand a territorial security for the discharge of the debt. After repeated efforts to obtain payment a territorial cession was demanded in 1851, to liquidate the debt—then grown to upwards of £780,000. The Nizám paid a part and promised to appropriate the revenues of certain districts to meet the remainder. The promise proved illusory.

In 1853, a new treaty was made with the Nizám. 'The British Government,' writes Sir Charles Aitchison, 'agreed to maintain an auxiliary force of not less than 5,000 infantry; 2,000 cavalry, and four field-batteries of artillery; and to provide for its payments and for certain pensions and interest on the debt. The Nizám ceded, in trust, districts yielding a gross revenue of fifty lacs of rupees, it being agreed that accounts should be annually rendered to the Nizám, and that any surplus revenue which might accrue should be paid

to him. By this treaty the Nizám, while retaining the full use of the subsidiary force and contingent, was released from the unlimited obligation of service in time of war, and the contingent ceased to be part of the Nizám's army, and became an auxiliary force kept by the British Government for the Nizám's use[1].'

The Assigned Districts have so prospered under British rule, and have been so long accustomed to consider themselves entitled to the benefits of British rule, that their eventual rendition to the Nizám is now regarded as one of the difficult questions of Indian politics. That question, however, was not raised by Lord Dalhousie. It is essentially the product of the improved position of the Nizám in our own days. This improvement has been greatly facilitated by Lord Dalhousie's arrangement for securing the maintenance of order at Haidarábád, by a body of drilled troops, not directly dependent on the Haidarábád Treasury for the regularity of their pay. The perpetual financial strain of the years preceding that arrangement has disappeared in the Nizám's dominions.

[1] Aitchison's *Treaties and Engagements*, vol. v, p. 139, ed. 1876. See pp. 212–221 for the Engagement, dated 21st May, 1853.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ANNEXATION OF OUDH

THE last and greatest of the annexations of territory made by Lord Dalhousie was the Province of Oudh. We have seen that in regard to the other Native States, annexed on failure of heirs, Lord Dalhousie did not invent the doctrine of lapse, that he did not widen it, but that he steadily applied it as a part of the deliberate policy of the Government of India, laid down before his arrival by preceding Governors-General, and sanctioned by the Court of Directors in England. In the case of Oudh we shall see that the annexation was ordered by the Home Government in opposition to the advice of Lord Dalhousie, and was carried out by him in obedience to the command of the Court of Directors who rejected his own proposals for a milder measure.

The great Province of Oudh, in the upper central basin of the Ganges, was guaranteed to the Nawáb Vizier by Lord Wellesley's treaty of 1801; and the Nawáb Vizier afterwards, with the consent of our Government, assumed the title of King of

Oudh. The treaty of 1801 was made on the engagement of the Nawáb Vizier (article 6) that His Excellency would establish 'such a system of administration, to be carried into effect by his own officers, as shall be conducive to the prosperity of his subjects, and be calculated to secure the lives and property of the inhabitants, and His Excellency will always advise with, and act in conformity to the counsel of, the officers of the said Honourable Company[1].'

The Nawáb Vizier, a miserable sensualist and debauchee, failed to carry out these stipulations. Instead of establishing a system of government conducive to the welfare of his subjects, he entered on a course of oppression and heartless misrule, and trusted to the British troops to protect him from the vengeance of his people. Lord Wellesley himself perceived what the end must be. 'I am satisfied,' he wrote in 1801, 'that no effectual security can be provided against the ruin of the Province of Oudh, until the exclusive management of the civil and military government of that country shall be transferred to the Company, under suitable provisions for the maintenance of His Excellency and family.'

Before thirty years passed, it became clear that no other alternative was indeed possible. In 1831,

[1] Aitchison's *Treaties, Engagements, and Sunnuds*, vol. ii, p. 102, ed. 1876.

Lord William Bentinck accordingly warned the King of Oudh that 'unless his territories were governed upon other principles than those hitherto followed, and the prosperity of the people made the principal object of his administration, the precedents afforded by the principalities of the Karnatic and Tanjore would be applied to the kingdom of Oudh, and to the entire management of the country, and the king would be transmuted into a State prisoner.'

The wicked old king died in 1837, and Lord Auckland, then Governor-General, determined to provide for the inevitable transfer of Oudh to the British administration. Article 7 of the new treaty in that year declared that if 'gross and systematic oppressions, anarchy and misrule should hereafter at any time prevail within the Oudh dominions, such as seriously to endanger the public tranquillity,' the British Government reserved to itself the express right of assuming the management of the country by its own officers [1]. This treaty was signed by the King of Oudh, but was disallowed by the Court of Directors. The latter fact was, however, withheld from His Majesty—one of the shifty acts of Lord Auckland which brought discredit on the British name. The Court of Directors by their Despatch of April 15, 1839,

[1] Aitchison's *Treaties, Engagements, and Sunnuds*, vol. ii, p. 140, ed. 1876.

directed that the disallowance of the treaty should be immediately announced to the King of Oudh. But Lord Auckland merely informed His Majesty that the British Government had determined to relieve him of certain onerous conditions respecting the subsidiary force established under the treaty. The formal abrogation of the treaty was never intimated to the king.

Ten years later there was an honest Governor-General of India. Lord Hardinge, in 1847, proceeded in person to Lucknow, and solemnly warned the king that unless His Majesty reformed his administration within two years, 'the British Government would be forced to interfere by assuming the government of Oudh[1].' Lord Hardinge emphasized his personal remonstrances by a declaration in writing that, under the treaty obligations, no other course was open to him. 'The Governor-General is required,' he wrote, 'when gross and systematic abuses prevail, to apply such a remedy as the exigency of the case may require: he has no option in the performance of this duty.' Knowing what we do of Lord Hardinge's soldierly exactitude in keeping his word, there can be little doubt that, had he remained in India, Oudh would have been brought under British management in 1849, at the end of the two years' probation.

[1] Aitchison's *Treaties and Engagements*, etc., vol. ii, p. 63, ed. 1876.

Meanwhile, however, Lord Dalhousie had succeeded him in 1848. No improvement took place in Oudh, but the new Governor-General resolved before carrying out the sentence passed on the King by Lord Hardinge, to give the native dynasty one more chance. His Majesty was again remonstrated with, but Oudh was not brought under British management in 1849. The king used the delay as a renewed license for oppression. At length in 1851, Colonel Sleeman, an officer of well-known sympathies for Native States, reported as Resident of Lucknow, in terms which compelled the Governor-General to ask himself whether he could any longer be responsible for such a spectacle of human misery and callous misrule.

Still Lord Dalhousie hoped against hope. It was not till 1854 that he found himself absolutely compelled to request Colonel Outram, then representing the Government of India at the Court of Lucknow, to report whether the evils described by previous Residents had been abated, or the reforms carried out for which Lord Hardinge had, in 1847, allowed a period of two years. Colonel Outram's report proved that not only had no real improvement taken place, but that Oudh was now completely delivered over to anarchy and the most cruel forms of oppression.

In June 1855, Lord Dalhousie thus summed up

the situation. 'For tolerating so long this total disregard of the obligations of solemn treaty, and for all the ills and human suffering which have sprung therefrom, the British Government is heavily responsible. It cannot, indeed, be charged with indifference to the evils whose existence it perceived, or with neglect of all exertions to palliate or remove them. For, from the date of the treaty' [of 1801] 'to the present day, the records of Government exhibit one unbroken series of acts of counsel, of complaint, and of condemnation, on the part of the Government of India, and its representatives at Lucknow. By official notes, in friendly letters, through the mouth of the Resident, and at formal personal interviews, the Governor-General has urged, from time to time, upon the notice of the Ruler of Oudh, the wretched internal condition of his kingdom; and throughout all that period, at frequent intervals, words of indignant censure have alternated with earnest remonstrances, with warning, and with threats.

'But the Government of India has never taken the one measure which alone could be effectual, by withdrawing its countenance from the Sovereign of Oudh, and its troops from his dominions. It is by these aids alone that the Sovereigns of Oudh have been enabled for more than half-a-century to persist with impunity in their course of oppression and misrule. Their eyes have never seen

the misery of their subjects; their ears have never been open to their cry. Secure of the safety of his person—secure of the stability of his throne—each successive ruler has passed his lifetime within the walls of his palace, or in the gardens round his capital, careful for nothing but the gratification of his individual passion—avarice, as in one; intemperance, as in another; or, as in the present king, effeminate sensuality, indulged among singers, musicians, and eunuchs, the sole companions of his confidence, and the sole agents of his power. Were it not for the support which the Government of India is known to be bound to afford the king against all domestic as well as against foreign enemies; were it not for the constant presence of British troops at Lucknow, the people of Oudh would speedily work their own deliverance, and would impose upon their Ruler the effectual check of general revolt by which Eastern Rulers are best controlled.'

'Colonel Sleeman,' continues Lord Dalhousie, 'thus bears his testimony to this important truth: "I am persuaded," he says, "that, if our troops were withdrawn from Oudh [Dominions], the landholders would in one month march over them all, and pillage the capital of Lucknow." I respectfully submit to the Honourable Court, that the time has come when inaction on the part of the British Government, in relation to the affairs of the kingdom of Oudh, can

now be no longer justified, and is already converting our responsibility into guilt [1].'

Lord Dalhousie set forth in careful detail the three possible methods of dealing with the situation. The King of Oudh might either be compelled to abdicate, and his territories be annexed to British India: or he might be maintained in his royal state and dignity, and the actual administration might be vested for ever in the East India Company: or he might be made to give over Oudh for a limited period to the British Government. Lord Dalhousie decided against the extreme course of enforced abdication on the ground that, although the Kings of Oudh had been execrable as rulers to their subjects, they had been faithful as allies to ourselves. 'I for my part, therefore,' he wrote, 'do not advise that the Province of Oudh should be declared to be British territory. . . It is my earnest counsel . . that while the king should be permitted to retain his royal title and rank, he should be required to vest the whole civil and militarv administration of Oudh in the hands of the Company, and that its power should be "perpetual in duration, as well as ample in extent."'

Lord Dalhousie was unable to obtain the assent of his own Council to this milder policy. Two of

[1] I reproduce this Minute of Lord Dalhousie from Sir Charles Jackson's *Vindication of the Marquis of Dalhousie's Administration*, pp. 131–134, ed. 1865.

the Members were for the most extreme measure; the two others were for the more moderate course. They all recorded separate Minutes, and were only unanimous in urging, 'that if the British Government felt the wrongs of the people of Oudh so strongly, as to interfere on their behalf under the Treaty of 1801, they would be acting inconsistently, and at the same time unjustly, if they annulled the Treaty, quitted the country, and left its people without redress[1].'

The Court of Directors and Her Majesty's Ministry, after carefully weighing the opinions of the Governor-General and of his Council, decided to adopt the sterner course. In a Despatch dated the 21st November, 1855, which has been characterised as 'a specimen of the art of writing important instructions so as to avoid responsibility,' the Court of Directors expressed their disapproval of Lord Dalhousie's milder plan, and issued their final orders for the annexation of Oudh. They further desired that the task should be carried out by Lord Dalhousie himself before laying down his office.

The worn-out Governor-General, now so crippled that he could scarcely walk, and broken down by illness and premature old age, would fain have avoided the heavy burden thus laid upon him. He

[1] Sir Charles Jackson's *Vindication of the Marquis of Dalhousie's Administration*, p. 144.

had distinctly forewarned the Court that the measure would be violently assailed by the opponents of the Indian Government, and would bring odium on the man who carried it out. But he had promised that, however the Court of Directors decided, he would bear the odium himself, instead of leaving it to be borne by the new Governor-General in the first days of his arrival in India.

It only remained for him to discharge his duty in the most considerate manner. After some fruitless negotiation with the king, the Province of Oudh was annexed to the British territories by Proclamation on the 13th February, 1856, on the ground, to use Lord Dalhousie's words, that 'the British Government would be guilty in the sight of God and man, if it were any longer to aid in sustaining by its countenance an administration fraught with suffering to millions.' 'With this feeling on my mind,' he wrote devoutly in his private diary, 'and in humble reliance on the blessing of the Almighty (for millions of His creatures will draw freedom and happiness from the change), I approach the execution of this duty, gravely and not without solicitude, but calmly and altogether without doubt.'

Thus was consummated, on the very eve of Lord Dalhousie's departure from India, the last of his great annexations.

CHAPTER IX

INTERNAL RE-ORGANISATION

LORD DALHOUSIE clearly discerned that these vast additions of territory implied momentous changes in the system of holding and ruling India. Until his time British India was, as I have mentioned, an isolated country, shut off from all powerful neighbours by intervening States, and commanded for strategical purposes from the sea-board. The magnificent harbour of Bombay dominated the Western Presidency, that of Karáchi formed the key to Sind. Madras had its long open littoral, with numerous roadsteads, and the great naval station at Trincomalee near its Southern extremity, on the Ceylonese coast. In Bengal the noble port of Calcutta, with the connected river-systems of the Ganges, Indus, and Brahmaputra, afforded water-ways inland to the furthest frontier of the British dominions in Northern India.

The conquest of the Punjab beyond the Gangetic system, the annexation of Oudh on the limit of that system, the lapse of the great Nágpur territories midway between the Eastern and Western

coasts, together with the administrative possession of the Berárs at the backbone of India, completely altered the strategic basis of our power, and converted British India from an isolated ocean-washed peninsula into an inland Asiatic realm.

The new territorial problem was not merely how to consolidate the new dominions of nearly a quarter of a million of square miles, but how to consolidate those dominions situated, as they were, at unprecedented distances from our military base on the sea-board. The new race problem was not merely how to govern new peoples, now numbering thirty-eight millions of souls, but how to adapt a system of government which had slowly grown up amid a contented population of British subjects, to warlike tribes and nations, some of them still smarting under recent conquest and defeat. The new political problem was how to extend the supervision of the Governor-General, which had hitherto been largely absorbed in the direct administration of Lower Bengal, so as to enable him to maintain watch and ward over the numerous new provinces as far apart as the Punjab, Burma, and the Berárs. For it must be borne in mind that not one of Lord Dalhousie's conquests and annexations was erected into a separate Local Government. They were all retained as 'Local Administrations' under the immediate control of the Governor-General in Council.

Any attempt to adequately state the methods by which Lord Dalhousie solved this triple problem, territorial, ethnical, and political, would involve a lengthy history of the times. It may be my privilege hereafter to make that attempt, and to trace the steps by which Lord Dalhousie converted the stationary India of Lord Wellesley into the progressive India of our own day. In the present volume I can only very briefly indicate a few of the main lines by which he advanced towards the accomplishment of his great task.

The British India which Lord Dalhousie bequeathed to his successor, was between a third and a half larger than the India of which he had received charge when he assumed the Governor-Generalship. He realized that in this new India the political centre of gravity had profoundly altered. He saw that it was no longer possible to hold the British dominions from the sea-board. The Governor of Bengal had, by a series of historical developments, grown into the Governor-General of India. Until Lord Dalhousie's rule the Governor-General was also Governor of the Lower Provinces of the Ganges, and responsible for their administration. His permanent seat of government had been Calcutta. When the Governor-General was absent from that capital, the senior member of his Council became Deputy-Governor of Bengal for the time being. But, except during

these intervals, the responsibility as head of the Local Government of Bengal rested, by law, upon the Governor-General of India.

This arrangement had long worked badly[1]. The conquests and annexations of Lord Dalhousie rendered it obsolete. Accordingly, by the Act of Parliament of 1853, the Governor-General was relieved of his functions as Governor of Bengal; a Lieutenant-Governor was appointed for the Lower Provinces; and Lord Dalhousie became the first Governor-General of India, in the strict sense of the term[2].

Under the previous system great bodies of troops had been massed round Calcutta, and the head-quarters of the Bengal Artillery lay at Dum Dum, seven miles off. These arrangements also became obsolete, after the conquest of the Punjab transferred the main military interests of India to the distant North. In 1853, therefore, Lord Dalhousie ordered the headquarters of the Bengal Artillery to be removed from the outskirts of Calcutta to Meerut, a thousand miles inland. A general movement of troops from around Calcutta, and from the Lower Provinces of Bengal, began to

[1] For its unsatisfactory results, see Sir John Strachey's *India*, pp. 340–343, ed. 1888.

[2] The legal title of Governor-General of India was created by the Statute of 1833: the official designation had previously been Governor-General of Bengal, or Governor-General of Fort William in Bengal.

take place towards the Punjab; a movement which received a further impulse from the annexation of Oudh in 1856.

This process has gradually completed itself. The once strong cantonment of Barrackpur, sixteen miles from Calcutta, is now a charming suburb for the merchants and British citizens of the metropolis, pleasantly diversified by uniforms, but more vitally concerned in the matter of monthly railway tickets than in any military problem. Chinsurah, ten miles further up the Húgli, with its magnificent accommodation for European troops and invalids, is now a solitude of palatial barracks without a soldier. The cordon of military stations which stretched across Lower Bengal, are abandoned for strategic positions in Oudh, the Punjab, and the Central Provinces. Native soldiers are dotted here and there in the Lower Gangetic valley, but the nearest place of military strength is Dinápur, 344 miles by railway, or 636 by the old river-route from the capital. I have seen the handsome and spacious mess-house of a Bengal station offered at auction for £40, and eventually knocked down for the value of the venetians and glass in its folding doors and windows.

With this alteration in the political and military centre of gravity in India, Calcutta has ceased to be the continuous seat of the Supreme Government. The Governor-General found it necessary to be

nearer to the chief scene of his responsibilities in the North-west. The hill-station of Simla in the Punjab, formerly an occasional health-resort, gradually grew into the seat of the Government of India during the chief part of the year. Lord Dalhousie used it as his eyrie from which to watch the newly-annexed plains that stretch below. In 1865, after the Mutiny had taught the lesson that India must be won or lost in the North, the permanent headquarters of the army were transferred to Simla.

The change, caused by military considerations, inevitably led to the Governor-General and his Council, together with the chief departments of the civil government, being concentrated in a larger measure at the Punjab hill-station. For experience disclosed the risks of misunderstandings and delays, involved by the distant separation of the political and military heads of the Indian administration. The Governor-General of India has during thirty-seven years, by the Statute of 1853, been completely dissociated from the Governorship of Bengal; and it is twenty-five years since the headquarters of the army were fixed at Simla. During a quarter of a century, except in seasons of famine, the Viceroy has spent eight or nine months annually at Simla or on tour, and about three or four months in Calcutta.

Calcutta has thus ceased to be distinctively the

political and military headquarters of the Government of India. It has been outstripped in population by the Western capital, Bombay; and it is being run hard by that great harbour in the race for commercial pre-eminence. The port of arrival and embarkation for the British troops has long since been transferred from Calcutta to Bombay.

But in spite of these changes, and of the rapid development of its Western and other rivals, Calcutta still goes on growing with the majestic growth of a vigorous maturity. Its unrivalled position at the mouth of the combined river-systems of Northern and North-eastern India, gives it a great advantage in regard to the older and bulkier staples of Bengal, rice, jute, and oil-seeds—although even these have, to a very large extent, deserted the slower water-routes for the railways. The enterprise of its merchants and capitalists has called into existence new industries on a vast scale, tea-planting, coal-mining, engineering foundries, and steam factories of many sorts. The new railway to the West will bring to it an increasing share of the wheat-trade; and it only awaits the better adaptation of the European smelting processes to the Indian coals and ores, to become the financial centre of a great iron industry in Bengal. Meanwhile Calcutta sits calm and strong on its ancient river-bank, and watches the produce of the richest provinces of the world float down to it by many waters, or pour

into it by an ever-extending network of railways. *Sedet aeternumque sedebit.*

For his four great new provinces, the Punjab, Burma, the Nágpur territories, and Oudh, Dalhousie organised a mixed system of government, by which he endeavoured to unite military strength and promptitude with civilian exactitude of justice and vigilance in administrative details. This involved not alone a combination of civilian and military officers in the personnel of the local administration, such as I have described in my chapter on the Punjab. It also demanded a very careful reconsideration of the law and judicial procedure, suited to the requirements of each of the new territories. To suddenly introduce the elaborate judicial systems of the older presidencies, would have been alike impolitic and impracticable. It would have been impolitic, for it would have subjected the newly-annexed populations to a standard of civil discipline, to which they had been unaccustomed, and which might have proved a burden heavier than they could bear. It would have been impracticable, because the new administrative bodies, hastily put together from the youth of the Civil Service and the military establishment, could not have fairly been expected to master the multifarious details of the older and more exact procedures.

Lord Dalhousie devised, therefore, a system of judicial and revenue administration for his new provinces made up from two sources. First, the local usages and customs which previously had the force of law in the individual territory annexed, so far as those usages and customs were consistent with public policy, and did not contravene the fundamental principles of humanity. Second, the simpler class of our own laws, enactments and regulations, for the judicial and revenue management of the country and for its police, culled from the systems at work in the older presidencies. The indigenous customs and usages of the individual territory formed the ground-work of the whole, while the super-structure was shaped with a considerate hand upon the models at work within British India.

Such was the leading idea of Lord Dalhousie's plan of administration, adopted for what were long known as the Non-Regulation Provinces. Examples of the system existed on a small scale before the time of Lord Dalhousie. Nor was it till after Lord Dalhousie's time that the system obtained the full development which I have indicated in the last paragraph. Indeed, it must be remembered that Oudh was added to the Empire in the last weeks of his rule. Yet it may be fairly stated that the Non-Regulation system of India was the child of Dalhousie, devised by his swift and comprehensive mind for his conquests and annexations.

Under this system the affairs of Native life went on with scarcely a perceptible change upon the previous footing; unless a man had dealings with our revenue officers, or came into our courts. In his customs of inheritance, and in all the affairs of his household, he could perceive no alteration. His usages of trade, his old system of contracts and of mercantile transactions, were undisturbed. His religious faith and even his religious prejudices were absolutely respected, so long as they did not involve a breach of the peace with rival religionists. But if he committed a crime, he found himself dealt with by a stricter judicial procedure, and fined or sent to prison, instead of having his hand or foot chopped off. The criminal classes soon discovered that they had a worse time under British rule, and many of them settled down to peaceful industry, aided by grants of land at low rent from the British Government.

In matters of civil justice the annexed populations had the benefit of fairer and more upright judges, together with a system which permitted of the decision being generally given according to their ancient native notions of right and wrong. The procedure was a little more exact and effective than that which they had been accustomed to, but at first only a little. The main difference between the judicial system under which they had grown up and the new one amounted to this—that the

English judge was as much interested in doing justice as the litigant was in obtaining it. In dealing with our revenue officers the peasants exchanged the old uncertainties of heavy demands irregularly enforced, and further mitigated or intensified by the venality or extortion of the tax-gatherer, for a fixed but moderate sum, which they knew they had to pay upon a definite date.

The essential feature of Lord Dalhousie's system, from the high political point of view, was that the new provinces remained under the direct control of the Governor-General in Council. No semi-independent Local Government, with a Governor or Lieutenant-Governor at its head, was created. Even in the case of the Punjab, in which Lord Dalhousie for special reasons established a Board, the control was retained directly, and in every important question, by the Government of India. Except in that special and temporary case, the local administration was presided over by a Chief Commissioner or Commissioner, immediately under the direction of the Governor-General in Council.

The essential feature of the system from the practical administrative point of view, was the concentration of all powers, judicial, executive, revenue and police, in the hands of the District Officer. In the older presidencies, the separation of the judicial and executive functions had gone on steadily in the Districts since before 1793. A

District Judge was charged with the conduct and supervision of civil justice within his jurisdiction. The functions of the District Magistrate were confined, more or less, to the pursuit and detection of crime, the trial of the less heinous offences, the police, the collection of the revenue, and the general executive work and government of the District. Under Lord Dalhousie's system all the duties of administration, judicial, revenue and police, were firmly combined in the hands of one officer, the Deputy Commissioner, as the head of the District, aided by assistants under his immediate orders.

In process of time this Non-Regulation system has undergone changes in both its essential aspects. As the country settled down and required a more detailed administration, the Chief Commissioner developed into a Lieutenant-Governor, and a Local Government with large powers of independence was created for the Province. Thus the Punjab is now a separate Lieutenant-Governorship; Oudh has been united with the North-western Provinces under a Lieutenant-Governor; and the creation of a Lieutenant-Governorship for Burma (Upper and Lower) is one of the current Indian proposals of the day. In like manner, as the people grew in prosperity, and as the legal questions attendant upon the growth of industry and trade became more complex, a separation gradually began to take place between the judicial and the executive

functions of the Deputy-Commissioner in Lord Dalhousie's Non-Regulation Provinces.

This division of duty, salutary and necessary as it has become in the present more complex state of native society, would have weakened the hands of the executive in the newly-annexed provinces. 'I want no such personage as a Sessions Judge here[1],' wrote Mr. Commissioner John Lawrence in the Trans-Sutlej States, forty-four years ago. The judicial work in the Districts formed out of those States is now conducted with as much regularity and precision by Civil and Sessions Judges, as it is in the oldest British territories of Madras or Bengal. The Non-Regulation system devised by the genius of Dalhousie for the administration of his new provinces was not only perfectly effective for bringing them under British government. It also proved to have within itself the capacity of adaptation to the new wants and requirements of the people, as they prospered and multiplied under British rule.

[1] Bosworth Smith's *Life of Lord Lawrence*, vol. i, p. 202, ed. 1885.

CHAPTER X

RAILWAYS. COMMERCE. TELEGRAPHS. PUBLIC WORKS

I HAVE hitherto dealt with the territorial and political aspects of Lord Dalhousie's government, for these were the aspects which the public opinion of his time pronounced, and which the deliberate voice of history must still declare, to be the most conspicuous features of his rule. But I have pointed out from the commencement that Lord Dalhousie's work in India was not alone a work of conquest, it was also a work of consolidation. He not only augmented the British dominions in India by between a third and a half, but he created a new mechanism for amalgamating them, and literally bound together the old and the new territories by bands of iron. Lord Dalhousie is the father alike of the Railway and of the Telegraph in India.

Clearly discerning that his improved strategic distribution of the military forces was only half his task, he introduced an entirely new system of internal communication for the defence of his new India. The idea of the Indian railway had been

suggested by Sir Macdonald Stephenson and others in 1841–43. But it was reserved to Lord Dalhousie to overcome what seemed to be the insuperable difficulties, and to initiate the work. The year after his annexation of the Punjab, 1850, saw the first sod turned.

In 1853, the year in which he removed the headquarters of the Bengal Artillery a thousand miles inland from the outskirts of Calcutta to Meerut, Lord Dalhousie wrote his great Railway Minute. That scheme, one of the most comprehensive and far-seeing which ever issued from a human brain, remains the basis of the whole railway system of India to this day. Lord Mayo, when amplifying it by feeder-lines and filling in connecting links, seventeen years afterwards, was careful to point out that his proposals still proceeded on the plan laid down by his illustrious predecessor. Lord Dalhousie pushed on the work so vigorously that the terminal section of the Great Indian Peninsular Railway was opened as far as Thána in 1853; and before the end of 1856, thousands of miles were under construction or survey. During the official year 1856–57, the lines carried close on two million passengers: they now carry over a hundred millions per annum. The railway system of India thus devised by Lord Dalhousie, and developed by his successors, had 15,245 miles at work in 1888–89.

Lord Dalhousie seized the opportunity, afforded

by the introduction of railways, to throw the country open to private enterprise and to English capital, in a degree before unknown, and with results which practically inaugurated a new industrial era in India. Instead of making railways a purely Government undertaking, he offered them to public companies under a system of State-guarantee. He did this with the deliberate intention of awakening and encouraging, in India, that spirit of private enterprise which had wrought such marvels in England. 'One of the greatest drawbacks,' he wrote to the Court of Directors, 'to the advance of this country [India] in material prosperity, has been the total dependence upon the Government, in which the community has placed itself, and its apparent helplessness to do anything for itself. Until very recently the only regular carrier in the country has been the Government, and no man could make a journey but with the Government establishments, or by the agency of a Government officer. It was but the other day that the agent of Lloyd's in the Port of Moulmain, where there is a considerable community of European merchants, formally complained that the Government of India did not keep a steam-tug, to tow their ships to sea for them. . . It is so in everything else. . . I submit that any time and money which the Honourable Court could save by undertaking such [railway] works itself, would be well

expended in securing the introduction at this time of a large amount of English capital and English energy, so as to encourage, by the successful issue which I contemplate for these railway undertakings, a more extensive employment of similar capital and similar efforts hereafter in connection with the products and trade of India.'

This was Lord Dalhousie's masterly idea. Not only would he consolidate the newly-annexed territories of India by his railways, and immensely increase the striking power of his military forces at every point of the Empire, but he would use a railway construction as a bait to bring British capital and private enterprise to India on a scale which had never entered the imagination of any previous Governor-General. He succeeded to an extent which even his daring foresight would not have ventured to predict. By 1879, over 98,000,000 sterling of private capital had been attracted to the construction of Indian Railways, under the system of guarantee planned and initiated by Lord Dalhousie.

In all these arrangements Lord Dalhousie had from the outset a vigilant eye to the mercantile aspects of his railway routes. 'The commercial and social advantages,' he wrote in his masterly Minute on Railways, 'which India would derive from their establishment are, I truly believe, beyond all present calculation. Great tracts are

teeming with produce they cannot dispose of. Others are scantily bearing what they would carry in abundance, if only it could be conveyed whither it is needed. England is calling aloud for the cotton which India does already produce in some degree, and would produce sufficient in quality, and plentiful in quantity, if only there were provided the fitting means of conveyance for it, from distant plains, to the several ports adopted for its shipment. Every increase of facilities for trade has been attended, as we have seen, with an increased demand for articles of European produce in the most distant markets of India; and we have yet to learn the extent and value of the interchange which may be established with people beyond our present frontier, and which is yearly and rapidly increasing. Ships from every part of the world crowd our ports in search of produce which we have, or could obtain in the interior, but which at present we cannot profitably fetch to them; and new markets are opening to us on this side of the globe under circumstances which defy the foresight of the wisest to estimate their probable value, or calculate their future extent.'

Lord Dalhousie provided free play for the mercantile possibilities of the railways by removing the previous checks and hindrances on Indian trade. Sir Edwin Arnold sums up these measures in a pithy marginal note—'All ports in India

made free.' If his words cannot be taken in their full modern significance, we may yet accept his statement that the results practically amounted to 'enfranchisement of all the coasting industry of Hindustan.'

Lord Dalhousie's commercial reforms extended over the whole of the British dominions in the East—from the consolidation and reform of the old vexatious excise regulations at the Straits to the declaration of Aden as a free port. He not only threw the coasts of India open to the world, but he facilitated the approach to them by lighthouses, marine surveys, and improved harbour accommodation. Merchant Service Acts were passed to improve and regulate the condition of sailors. An effort was made to put down the old adulterations practised in the cotton trade. An alternative port was planned at the mouth of the Matlá River, to protect Calcutta from the then apprehended consequences of the shifting and silting up of the Húgli channel.

The unprecedented impulse which Lord Dalhousie thus gave to Indian trade may be realized by the following figures. During his eight years of rule the export of raw cotton more than doubled itself, from 1½ millions sterling to close on 3½ millions. The export of grain multiplied by more than three-fold from £890,000 in 1848 to £2,900,000 in 1856. Not only was the export of

the old staples enormously increased, but new articles of commerce poured into the markets, under the influence of improved internal communications and open ports. The total exports of merchandise rose from 13⅓ millions sterling in 1848 to over 23 millions in 1856.

The vast increase of productive industry, represented by these figures, enabled the Indian population to purchase the manufactures of England on an unprecedented scale. The imports of cotton goods and twist into India rose from 3 millions sterling in 1848 to 6⅓ millions in 1856. The total imports of merchandise and treasure increased during the eight years from 10½ to 25¼ millions.

The Parliamentary statistics speak themselves so eloquently as to the results of Lord Dalhousie's commercial policy, that any comment of mine would only weaken the force of the bare figures.

The great Pro-consul was not content, however, to bind together the Empire of India by the iron lines. He also introduced two other powerful instruments of consolidation into India—the telegraph and a half-penny post. His cheap universal postal rates for India will be treated of in the next chapter. The creation of a telegraph system seemed like a dream of the genii to the Asiatic imagination, and appeared almost an impossibility in India to the practical European mind. To

realize the difficulties which Lord Dalhousie had to encounter and which he overcame, we must again go back to the descriptions written while the sense of the achievement was still fresh.

Lord Dalhousie's telegraph makers were no skilled engineers, but such men as he could lay his hand on, with a Calcutta doctor as their chief. 'He had a field for experiment,' wrote Sir Edwin Arnold a quarter of a century ago, 'subject to electric storms and perturbations, unknown in Europe: a soil alternately baked into one electrical condition, and sodden into another; winds that would lay the telegraph posts in England across the lines from Birmingham to London in a night: little timber, less iron, no skilled labour, no appliances at starting, and—the white ant. The ground which he selected to begin upon, on the principle of measuring difficulty by its maximum, was a lake from June to December, and a wilderness of fissured clay from December to June. . . His posts had to pass through jungles, where wild beasts used them for scratching-stations, and savages stole them for firewood and rafters for huts. Inquisitive monkeys spoiled the work . . . by dragging the lines into festoons, or dangling an ill-conducting tail from wire to wire. Crows, kites and fishing eagles made roosting-places of the lines in numbers so great as to bring them to the ground; though once or twice a flash of lightning, striking a wet wire, would

strew the ground with the carcases of the feathered trespassers by dozens. The white ant nibbled galleries in the posts, and the porcupine and bandicoot burrowed under them.'

The tremendous electrical disturbances caused by storms in India, seemed for a time to render success impossible. 'I was driven,' writes Sir William O'Shaughnessy, 'step by step to discard every screw, and lever, and pivot, and foot of wire, and frame-work and dial, without which it was practicable to work. I successively tried and dismissed the English vertical astatic needle-telegraph, the American dotter, and several contrivances of my own invention. Every thunderstorm put the astatic needles *hors de combat*.' He then goes on to state how he at length triumphed over these difficulties. The Indian storms and sky-artillery were at length brought under control. In one terrific North-wester of the equinox, he says, 'a flash of lightning struck the line, traversed the instrument, made its wires red-hot, and melted their ends into beads. In less than two minutes, Charles Todd, the signaller on duty, had placed another coil in gear, and reported by telegraph to Calcutta (150 miles off) what had taken place in his office.'

These heroic labours of Lord Dalhousie's self-trained electricians were destined to have marvellous results. The railway and the telegraph were worth thousands of men to us in the Mutiny of

1857, and it is by the railway and the telegraph that India is now strategically held. The telegraph wire followed Lord Clyde's rapid campaigns yard by yard. It brought the latest news from Calcutta to his breakfast tent, 1000 miles off, by the time that he had bathed after his morning march. It flashed back the details of the day's battle or assault to the Governor-General in Calcutta, before he sat down to dinner. 'It is that accursed string that strangles us,' exclaimed a mutineer pointing to the telegraph wire as he was led out to execution.

The electric telegraph now forms the basis not only of our military policy in India, but of the modern mercantile system of India. Indeed, in a country of such vast distances, it is difficult to conceive how the operations either of civilised government or of civilised commerce could be carried on without it. Every morning the great Indian merchant begins his work by reading the cypher instructions from his correspondent in London, despatched the previous night. Calcutta and Bombay, 1409 miles distant by railway on the opposite coasts of India, are within a few minutes' speaking distance by wire, and discuss their hourly transactions with each other throughout the day. There are now 100,000 miles of telegraphic wire in India, along which more than 3 million messages are transmitted each year.

In order to introduce the railway and the telegraph in India, Lord Dalhousie had to reconstitute the whole Department of Public Works. Indeed, before his time such a Department, in the modern sense of the term, did not exist. A Military Board had mismanaged a parsimonious expenditure averaging, during seventeen years, only £169,901 per annum, on all works of public utility apart from Military and Civil Buildings. Even of this sum a large proportion had gone for repairs, and one estimate returns 'the average Public Works expenditure (after deductions) of the pre-Dalhousie period at £90,000 or a half per cent. of the public revenue [1].' Even down to 1850, the most competent authorities state that the average yearly charge for the whole of India, for all Public Works, excepting of course Military and Civil Buildings, 'hardly exceeded £250,000 [2].' According to the Parliamentary return the entire charge of Public Works of every sort in 1847, the year preceding Lord Dalhousie's arrival, only amounted to £260,000.

Lord Dalhousie during his eight years of office abolished the old incompetent Military Board, created a great Department of Public Works, and increased the Public Works expenditure to 2½

[1] Sir Edwin Arnold's *Marquis of Dalhousie's Administration*, vol. ii, p. 284, ed. 1865.

[2] *The Finances and Public Works of India*, by Sir John Strachey, G.C.S.I., and Lieutenant-General Richard Strachey, R.E., F.R.S., p. 86, ed. 1882.

millions sterling in 1856. He not only gave roads, canals, court-houses, jails, treasuries and the whole fabric of civilised administration to the Punjab: no province escaped his attention, and the routes throughout all India, with their strongly constructed bridges and permanent metalled-ways, date their improvement from him. Among Lord Dalhousie's irrigation works, I have already described the great Bárí Duáb Canal in the North [1]. Time would fail me to merely enumerate all his beneficent enterprises. The operations on the Godavari River would alone form a magnificent memorial of his rule.

In order to carry out these and other of his great Public Works, Lord Dalhousie not only created a new Department of Government, but he also organised a new branch of the Government Service. He realized that the operations of civil engineering are best conducted by civil engineers. He, accordingly, laid the foundation of that noble service of highly-trained engineers brought out from England, to whom India is so largely indebted for the material frame-work of its modern development. At the same time he endeavoured by establishing and encouraging engineering schools in each of the three Presidencies, to rear up an indigenous branch of the profession within India itself.

[1] *Vide ante*, p. 103.

CHAPTER XI

The Half-penny Post. Education. Finance

Lord Dalhousie is also the father of cheap postage, I had almost said of the civilised Post Office, in India. We are assured by one of his contemporaries that, on Lord Dalhousie's arrival in India, the country was no further advanced in regard to postal facilities than it had been two centuries before, under Muhammadan rule. Indeed, the people were rather worse off, for we had made private letter-carrying penal, and yet levied such prohibitive rates on the public carriage of letters, as to practically place the Post Office beyond the means of the native population.

Lord Dalhousie appointed a Commission of three able civilians to enquire into the working of the Indian postal system. They found that the Post Office was a heavy drain upon the public revenues. The Station Doctor or some half-employed subaltern was usually the local post-master. The postage on a single letter amounted to three or four days' wages of a skilled native artisan. The subordinates in the country Post Offices were notoriously cor-

rupt, forwarding or delaying letters as they pleased, and seldom delivering one to a villager without a personal fee.

In 1853–54, Lord Dalhousie swept away the whole antiquated fabric of obstruction, and replaced it by the modern postal system of India. He levied a uniform rate of half an *áná*, now equal to a half-penny (although then about three farthings) for all letters not exceeding half a *tolá* in weight, and for all India. The idea of thus substituting a uniform unit of weight and of charge for the whole of the vast Indian Empire, seemed to many orthodox financiers of his time to be an act of sheer folly. It was, they said, pushing Rowland Hill's scheme of a penny postage for England to an inconsequential extreme. It was not so much an extension as a *reductio ad absurdum* of the reform which had been effected in the postal system of Great Britain. What could be more extravagant, or indeed more unjust, than to levy the same charge on two letters, one of which was to be delivered in the adjoining street, and the other on the opposite side of India. Lord Dalhousie listened, and pursued his own course, with the following remarkable results.

Instead of Indian letters being charged at differential rates, according to distance, they are now carried throughout the length and breadth of India, for a distance sometimes exceeding 2000 miles, at

a uniform rate of half an *ánd*, at present equal to a half-penny, for the half *tolá*. Instead of the old wrangle over every letter as to the payment and delivery, a wrangle in which the rural postman invariably managed to squeeze something for himself out of the native recipient, Lord Dalhousie substituted a simple system of postage stamps. Instead of the Post Office being a chronic drain on the finances, Lord Dalhousie's reform made it self-supporting, and has of late years converted it into a source of actual revenue, so far as its operations in British India are concerned. The social results, however, have proved even more important than the administrative or financial ones. Lord Dalhousie's half-penny post has done more than perhaps his railways, or his telegraphs, and possibly as much as even the great system of the Public Instruction to which I shall presently refer, in revolutionising the old stagnant and self-isolated life of India.

These results are now so familiar to us, that in order to realize what they were felt to be at the time, we must as usual go back to the local Indian literature of (in this case) six and thirty years ago. 'The Post Office Commission alone,' said the *Calcutta Review* in 1854, 'The Post Office Commission alone, had Lord Dalhousie done nothing else, would suffice to place his name in the list of Anglo-Indian reformers alongside of Cornwallis.'

The regular post within India now runs over 70,000 miles, and over a large proportion of this distance it runs several times each day. It distributes 300 millions of letters annually, collected at over 17,000 Post Offices and letter-boxes. But the growth of Indian correspondence under Lord Dalhousie's system may, perhaps, be best indicated by the figures for three single years. The year previous to the introduction of his half-penny post in 1854, barely 19 millions of letters were posted in all India, and a very large proportion of them were official letters. In 1860, six years after Dalhousie's postal reform, the number had increased to 47 millions. It now amounts, as I have said, to 300 millions, and the increase has been chiefly derived from private, as distinguished from official, correspondence. Lord Dalhousie, in fact, created letter-writing on a great scale among the natives of India.

In the same year that Lord Dalhousie introduced the cheap post and created the modern postal system of India, the foundations of a national system of education in India were also laid. During his first five years of office, Lord Dalhousie had carefully studied the various experimental methods of Public Instruction at work. In 1853, during the lull between his conquest of Lower Burma and the annexation of the Nágpur terri-

tories, he earnestly recommended that the system of vernacular education, associated with the honoured name of Mr. Thomason, should be extended to the whole North-western Provinces. In the following year the Court of Directors, with these and other proposals for the development of vernacular instruction before them, at length dealt in a comprehensive spirit with the great question of Indian Education.

The Despatch of Sir Charles Wood in July, 1854, to use the words of Lord Dalhousie, 'left nothing to be desired, if, indeed, it did not authorise and direct that more should be done than is within our present grasp.' This great State-paper put an end for ever to the old controversy between the rival supporters of English and of the classical languages of India, as the basis and main subject of education. For it founded Indian education neither on the one nor the other, but on the modern vernacular languages of the Indian peoples. A vast network of educational institutions has, under the system thus initiated, been spread over India. Those institutions start from the indigenous hedge-schools of the Hindus and the old Mosque schools of the Musalmans, which have now been brought within Government inspection. They advance, by well-ordered upward steps, to the Vernacular and Anglo-vernacular Schools, the High Schools, the Affiliated Colleges, and the Universities. The

whole forms a complete gradation of Public Instruction, under the direction and control of the State.

This was the crowning act of consolidation, accomplished in India under Lord Dalhousie. It has set in motion new forces, intellectual and political, whose magnitude it is impossible to gauge, but which the British Government now finds itself compelled to reckon with. Amid all the checks which occurred to Dalhousie's consolidating system in India, after his firm hand was withdrawn, this tremendous factor of unification has gone on working without break or intermission, gaining strength, and displaying its marvellous results on an ever-extending scale. Even the Mutiny did not interrupt the progress of Indian education. The year 1857, which saw us forced to fight for our existence, also saw the Acts passed to establish the three Indian Universities, since increased to five, which form the cope-stone of Public Instruction in India. Every Viceroy, whatever his public policy or private idiosyncrasies, has sought to connect his name with the magnificent system of Indian State-education introduced during Lord Dalhousie's rule. Under that system, five Universities and 133,000 schools and colleges are now educating 3½ million pupils in India.

I have been careful to describe the educational system of India, not as the direct work of Lord

Dalhousie, but as having been introduced under his rule. The name of Sir Charles Wood, afterwards Lord Halifax, must always be the name chiefly associated with this great work. The lesser, but by no means unimportant, functions of Lord Dalhousie were to supply in part the materials which guided Sir Charles Wood, and to strenuously carry out Sir Charles Wood's views. Nor must it be forgotten that the scheme of Public Instruction, thus initiated by Sir Charles Wood, practically introduced into India by Lord Dalhousie, and strictly developed on the lines then laid down, has received from later Governors-General an expansion which Lord Dalhousie would scarcely have ventured to anticipate. For side by side with the Government Schools and Colleges, and incorporated with them into the system of official inspection, a great body of aided institutions is now maintained and conducted by private enterprise.

The India of the railway, the telegraph the halfpenny post, and the State-inspected school, that is to say, the India created by Lord Dalhousie, is the India of to-day. We know of no other India. But to the Englishmen who stood by and witnessed the construction of that India, it seemed as if an entirely new Empire was being called into existence. The immediate visible result of Dalhousie's rule was, as I have said, a unification of territory. Yet to close observers it was evident from the first, as it

was clear to Lord Dalhousie himself, that this unification of Indian territory was only the first stage in a still more splendid, if more perilous, work of unification—the unification of the Indian races. Let me once more quote from a writer of a quarter of a century ago, when 'the conception which Lord Dalhousie cherished of a consolidated Empire,' was still fresh in men's minds. 'We are making,' wrote Sir Edwin Arnold in 1865, when summing up the results of Lord Dalhousie's rule, 'We are making a people in India, where hitherto there have been a hundred tribes, but no people [1].'

It is very easy to over-estimate the progress which has since been effected, it would be most foolish to exaggerate the degree of solidarity which has yet been attained. What I have endeavoured to do is to enable Englishmen to calmly gauge the strength of the movement now at work in India, by a careful exposition of the forces from which the movement derived its impulse.

In the midst of his great measures of conquest and consolidation, Lord Dalhousie kept a firm although liberal hand upon the public expenditure of India. Changes in the system of account render it difficult to bring out the facts of Lord Dalhousie's finance with exactitude, except by going into a mass of detail unsuitable for the present book. The

[1] *Marquis of Dalhousie's Administration*, vol. ii, p. 388.

brothers Strachey in their admirable work have dwelt on the difficulties which beset any attempt at financial comparisons between the past and the present in India[1]. I shall, therefore, confine myself to reproducing the main figures from the official statement annually presented to Parliament[2].

During the twenty-one years, from 1842 to 1862 inclusive, there were seventeen years of deficit, and only four years of surplus, in the Indian Exchequer. Those sole four years of surplus were the central years of Lord Dalhousie's rule, from 1850 to 1853 inclusive[3]. Yet Lord Dalhousie spent with a liberality never ventured on by any previous Governor-General upon Public Works. The Parliamentary figures on this item are obscured by changes in account. But we are informed by Lord Dalhousie's first historian that his Public Work expenditure was 2½ millions in 1854, 3 millions in 1855, and 2¼ millions in 1856 (according to the Parliamentary Abstract close on 2½ millions): as compared with an average expenditure of only £169,901 during seventeen preceding years.

In every Department Lord Dalhousie, while increasing efficiency chiefly by re-organisation, did not

[1] *The Finances and Public Works of India*, by Sir John Strachey, G.C.S.I., and Lieutenant-General Richard Strachey, R.E., F.R.S., pp. 23–26, ed. 1882.

[2] *Statistical Abstract relating to British India*, 22nd Number, dated India Office, 7 September, 1888, pp. 310–313.

[3] *Idem*, p. 311.

shrink from an increase of expenditure when an increase was absolutely required. In 1856, the Parliamentary Accounts show an increase of ¾ of a million on the Army compared with 1848, and a still larger increase of over 1⅛ millions in the expenditure on Civil Administration. The total expenditure was 5⅓ millions sterling greater in 1856, than in 1848, the first year of Lord Dalhousie's rule[1]. This increase of expenditure, due partly to expansion of territory, partly to increased efficiency, and chiefly to Public Works, was more than met by the increase in revenue.

During the same period (1848–1856 inclusive) the total revenue of India rose from over 24½ millions to over 30¾ millions, or, in round figures, by nearly 6¼ millions sterling[1]. Of this great increment more than 2 millions were derived from the land revenue —which in India is not so much a tax as a low rental that Government derives from the land. Lord Dalhousie swept away the cumbrous lumber of the antiquated Boards, alike in the Commissariat and Public Works, and replaced them by vigilant Departments under individually responsible Heads.

[1] *Statistical Abstract relating to India,* presented to Parliament, pp. 310–311, ed. 1888.

CHAPTER XII

LORD DALHOUSIE'S MILITARY POLICY

LORD DALHOUSIE perceived that the defence of the new India would prove an onerous burden. What he could accomplish by removing the troops from the sea-board where they were no longer required, and massing them in North-western India, where he foresaw that danger might arise, he accomplished. What he could effect by pushing on railways and telegraphs, and thus increasing the striking force of his armament at any threatened point, he effected. But he also clearly discerned that the future safety of India was not alone a question of the distribution, but also of the numerical strength of the army, and of an equipoise between the British and Native Forces in that country.

The previous chapters of this book have recorded what Lord Dalhousie accomplished in each of the great Departments of his work. This chapter, unhappily for England in 1857, will have to record chiefly the measures which he proposed, and which the Home Government failed to carry out.

Lord Dalhousie, while acknowledging the great

military qualities of the Regular Native Army, was deeply impressed with the possible dangers involved by its large increase in numbers since the first Afghan War. In 1838, the total Native Force is stated to have been under 154,000 men. The outbreak of the first Sikh War in 1845 found it at 240,310. After reductions on the close of that war, Lord Hardinge bequeathed to Lord Dalhousie a Native Army more numerous than at the last great peace. Lord Dalhousie's conquest of the Punjab led to a further increase of the regular Sepoy regiments from 800 to 1000 men—'a step taken at the urgent solicitation of Sir Charles Napier, after the second Sikh War[1].' Lord Dalhousie, himself, became afterwards convinced of the impolicy of this increase to the regular regiments, and proposed their reduction. But towards the close of his rule the Native Army still stood as high as 233,000 men.

Lord Dalhousie endeavoured to meet the possible perils of so large a Native Regular Army by four series of measures. First, by a better distribution with a view not only to holding the country more securely, but also to breaking up the masses of the Regular Native troops. This measure, which served us in such good stead in 1857, he effected upon the principle laid down by Lord Hardinge,

[1] *India under Dalhousie and Canning*, by the Duke of Argyll, p. 56, ed. 1865.

and in spite of the protest of Sir Charles Napier. 'I have heard,' sneered Sir Charles, 'that Lord Hardinge objected to the assembling of the Indian troops, for fear they should conspire. I confess I cannot see the weight of such an opinion[1].' Lord Dalhousie's next measure was one in which Sir Charles actively concurred, the raising of Ghúrka or hill regiments—a class of troops which Lord Dalhousie so highly valued, that one of his last acts was to urge their further increase.

Lord Dalhousie's third and, as it proved during the Mutiny of 1857, most important measure, was the creation of a new Irregular Force in the Punjab. This force he placed under a separate system and discipline of its own. Notwithstanding the remonstrances of Sir Charles Napier as Commander-in-Chief, Lord Dalhousie kept it apart from the general army of India, under the direct orders of the Punjab Administration[2]. Lord Dalhousie's fourth measure, or rather series of measures, with a view to maintaining a safe counterpoise to the Regular Native Army, consisted in his protests against the withdrawal of European regiments from India, and his proposals for their still further increase—protests disregarded, and proposals never carried into effect, by the Government in England.

[1] *Report by the Commander-in-Chief in India to the Governor-General in Council*, dated 27th November, 1849.

[2] *Minute by the Most Noble the Governor-General of India*, dated 26th, October, 1850, *et in aliis locis*.

Lord Dalhousie, while thus endeavouring to provide against the dangers of the Regular Native Army in India, frankly and generously acknowledged the merits of the Native troops. In so doing he could scarcely go further than the encomiums passed upon them by his soldier-predecessor Lord Hardinge, and indeed by Sir Charles Napier himself, when that fiery warrior was in a praising mood.

During the embittered discussions which Sir Charles Napier afterwards raised, Sir Charles posed as the foreseeing man, and accused the Native troops of general mutiny at Wazírábád in December, 1849, or January, 1850. This charge was quite honestly believed by the passionate old Commander-in-Chief to justify the usurpation which he had made on the powers of the Governor-General in Council, when ordering, on his own authority, an increase in the Code of Allowances to the troops. Such an act, if permitted, would have rendered illusory the financial and general control of the Army vested in the Governor-General by Parliament.

In judging of this occurrence we must correct the subsequent, and perhaps pardonable, violence of the disappointed old soldier, in his Indian Misgovernment[1], by the Official Records written at the time. Those Records have been printed in a

[1] *Defects Civil and Military of the Indian Government*, by Lieutenant-General Sir C. J. Napier, edited by Lieutenant-General Sir F. W. P. Napier.

complete form, beginning with Sir Charles Napier's original indiscretion down to his resignation, and the final verdict by the Duke of Wellington upon an officer whose noble qualities as a life-long comrade and thorough soldier the Great Duke highly valued, but whose follies cf temper he deeply deplored[1]. I, as a civilian, confine myself to the Duke of Wellington's words.

'A close examination of the papers sent to me by Sir Charles Napier himself,' wrote the Duke of Wellington[2], 'with his report of the transaction, convinced me that there was no mutiny of the troops at Wazírábád, in December, 1849, or January, 1850. There were murmurings and complaints, but no mutiny. But it appears, according to Sir Charles Napier's statement, that there existed in the country a general mutiny, which pervaded the whole army of 40,000 men in the Punjab, in the month of January, 1850. Where is the report? where is the evidence of that mutiny, except in Sir Charles Napier's report sent to the Horsè Guards, and in the 66th regiment, the corps at Govindgarh, which had been suppressed in a most signal manner without difficulty and without effort?

'It appears that the 66th regiment at Govindgarh, having mutinied, piled its arms in the fort under the orders of its officers, was marched out, disbanded, and

[1] *Discussions between the Marquis of Dalhousie and General Sir C. J. Napier, G.C.B.* Folio printed by order of a General Court of the East India Company, 21st December, 1853.

[2] *Memorandum of the Duke of Wellington*, dated London, July 30th, 1850, pp. 52-54 of the printed papers.

sent into the Company's provinces, in this very month of January, 1850, with the knowledge of the whole army of the Punjab, and that there had not been the sign of movement of a man in favour or support of the mutinous regiment, thus punished and disarmed, the Commander-in-Chief having quitted Wazírábád and proceeded on his march to Peshawar (*sic*).

'On the 16th of January he issued to the army a general order as follows:—"I have seen most of the armies in the world, and I have never seen one that is better cared for than the army of the East India Company. Neither have I ever seen a more obedient, more honourable army. I will not allow a few malignant, discontented *scoundrels* to disgrace their colours and their regiments, by an insolent attempt to dictate to their Government what pay that Government should give to soldiers towards whom it has always been both just and generous." Thus it appears that His Excellency did not conceal that insubordination existed, nor evade the mention of it, and that he characterized its nature and described its extent.'

I have reproduced the text of the Duke of Wellington's verdict for two reasons. First, because I believe that his words will now be read by the great majority of even the more exact students of Indian History for the first time. Second, because they place in a true light the foolish charges wafted about after the Mutiny in 1857, with reference to Lord Dalhousie's alleged neglect of the symptoms of Mutiny, seven years previously. I now leave those foolish charges to the fate they deserve, and shall set forth, as briefly

as possible, the steps which Lord Dalhousie actually took to maintain the equipoise between the Regular Native Forces and the British Troops in India.

Lord Dalhousie was deeply convinced of the dangers incident to an inadequate strength of English regiments in India. He not only protested against any reduction of the English troops, but urged the necessity of their increase. Under the Bill of 1853, the Government obtained the sanction of Parliament to raise the strength of the Local European Regiments in India, from a maximum of 12,000 to a maximum of 20,000 men. But instead of vigorously availing themselves of this permission, it is stated that the Home Authorities added only three regiments to the Company's Local European Force during Lord Dalhousie's rule.

Meanwhile the Home Government began that fatal process of depletion which was, in 1857, to cost so dear. Under the pressure of the Crimean War they demanded two of Her Majesty's Infantry Regiments from India. Lord Dalhousie protested in terms which have been well described as prophetic. He solemnly warned the Home Government that the question was not alone one of the present exigencies of India, but the larger and more permanent question of 'the security and stability of our position in the East.'

'We are perfectly secure so long as we are strong, and are believed to be so;' wrote Lord

Dalhousie on the 13th Sept., 1854. 'But if European troops shall now be withdrawn from India to Europe; if countenance shall thus be given to the belief, already prevalent, that we have grappled with an antagonist' [in the Crimea] 'whose strength will prove equal to overpower us; if by consenting to withdrawal we shall weaken that essential element of our military strength' [the British troops in India], 'which has already been declared to be no more than adequate for ordinary times; and, if, further, we should be called on to despatch an army to the Persian Gulf, an event which, unlooked for now, may any day be brought about by the thraldom in which Persia is held, and by the feeble and fickle character of the Shah; then, indeed, I shall no longer feel and can no longer express the same confidence as before, that the security and stability of our position in the East will remain unassailed.

'I confidently submit to the candour of Her Majesty's Ministers that, placed as it is amid distances so vast, amidst multitudes so innumerable, amidst people and sects, various in many things, but all alike in this, that they are lately conquered subjects of our race, alien to them in religion, language, in colour, in habits, in all feelings and interests, the Government of India has had solid grounds for the declaration, more than once made of late years, that the European force

at its command is not more than adequate for preserving the Empire in security and tranquillity even in ordinary times, much more then,' etc.

In spite of this remonstrance, two British regiments were withdrawn from India in 1854, and three years later the danger so accurately foreshadowed by Lord Dalhousie arrived. Of the thirty-three battalions of European infantry, which Lord Dalhousie regarded as the minimum compatible with safety, two had been recalled to England, and notwithstanding the promises of the Home Government they had never been replaced. Five or six of the nominally remaining European regiments were absent (as Lord Dalhousie had foreseen that they might be absent) in the Persian War. The Mutiny thus found India drained of the British troops on which Lord Dalhousie had solemnly warned Her Majesty's Ministers that our existence in India depended.

But a still more fatal disregard of Lord Dalhousie's representations had taken place. He felt that the annexations and conquests during his rule rendered absolutely necessary an increase of our European regiments, and a decrease both of the cavalry and infantry of the Regular Native Army. He gave to his declaration on this subject all the solemnity which belongs to a great Viceroy's last official act in India. On the 28th February, 1856, at his final meeting of Council, he laid on the table

nine Minutes, setting forth the military changes that had become necessary for the safety of the territories which he was about to quit for ever.

These nine Minutes were, by his request, immediately forwarded to the Court of Directors. Yet, wrote Sir Charles Jackson in 1865, 'I cannot find that any further attention was paid to these Minutes, either at home or in India. Nothing more was heard of them until the year 1858. . . . Even now it is impossible to state the full effect of these Minutes. For although the authorities at the India House, including Mr. Kaye himself, rendered me every assistance, two of them are not to be found; and I have been obliged to collect as much as possible of their effect (but whether or not the whole, I am unable to say,) from references to them in the other Minutes[1].'

Yet these nine Minutes, if they had been acted on, might have themselves sufficed to avert the Mutiny of 1857. The first Minute proposed to raise two new European Cavalry regiments for the Company's service in Bengal. It also proposed to disband four regular regiments of Native Cavalry —the very force which in 1857 proved so disloyal. By the second and third Minutes, the European Infantry would have been increased from its reduced strength, in 1854, of 31 battalions to 35 battalions,

[1] Space compels me to still further summarise Sir Charles Jackson's abstract of their contents.

and if possible to 37; disbanding four Native regiments to obtain officers for the new European troops. If his request for 37 European battalions of infantry could be granted, then two more Native regiments were to be disbanded. The fourth Minute, proposed to move the European Invalid Companies, stationed at Chanár, to some strategic point where they might add to our visible military strength. The fifth Minute urged 'the augmentation of European Companies of Artillery.'

The sixth proposed, in addition to the disbandment of the four or six regiments of Native Infantry, referred to under the second and third Minutes, a further reduction of 200 men in each of the remaining regiments of Bengal Native Infantry. This would have given a further regimental reduction of the Sepoys by 14,910 men, in addition to the four or six Native regiments of infantry disbanded. It also proposed to increase the strength of the Ghúrka regiments and of the Irregular Native Infantry, in the Punjab—the two very forces which proved so useful in the Mutiny—by 3,200 men.

The seventh Minute urged, in addition to the four regiments of Native Bengal Cavalry which were to be disbanded, a further reduction of eighty troopers in each of the remaining regiments. The total reduction in the Native Regular Cavalry, would have amounted to 2,400 troopers. The other Minutes proposed to increase the number of

the European officers in the Native regiments, and to thoroughly reform the Commissariat arrangements by separating it from the regimental strength, and constituting it (as it now is constituted) a separate Staff Department.

From first to last Lord Dalhousie insisted on the European Force, 'as the essential element of our strength.' He urged the decrease of the Regular Native Army, which was the cause of our disaster in 1857. He not less solemnly urged the increase of the Punjab Irregular Regiments and gallant Ghúrkas, whose loyalty so materially helped us to retrieve that disaster. Again I feel that any words of mine would only weaken the force of the actual facts.

While the public was declaring that his conquests had put an end to the possibility of war in the Company's possessions, and was prophesying smooth things, Dalhousie seriously admonished not only the Government in England, but likewise the officials whom he was leaving behind in India, of the perpetual presence of danger. Nor was he content with impressing this great fact on the authorities, English and Indian alike. He spoke also with the utmost plainness, and in memorable words, to the Anglo-Indian community. Let me quote the solemn warning, I had almost said the too prescient forebodings, with which he replied to the congratulatory addresses of the citizens of Calcutta in February 1856:

'No prudent man, having any knowledge of Eastern affairs, would ever venture to predict a prolonged continuance of peace in India. We have learned by hard experience how a difference with a native power [the Sikhs], which seems at first to be but the little cloud no bigger than a man's hand, may rapidly darken and swell into a storm of war, involving the whole empire in its gloom. We have lately seen how, in the very midst of us [among the Santáls], insurrection may rise like an exhalation from the earth, and how cruel violence, worse than all the excesses of war, may be suddenly committed by men who, to the very day on which they broke out in their frenzy of blood, have been regarded as a simple, harmless and timid race, not by the Government alone, but even by those who knew them best, who were dwelling among them, and were their earliest victims. Remembering these things, no prudent man will venture to give you assurance of continued peace[1].'

Neither on this, nor on any other question, did Lord Dalhousie shrink from declaring the plain truth, however unwelcome the truth might be at the time. His briefest 'office-notes,' thrown off in a moment, upon the daily multitude of questions which came up to him for decision, have in them the ring of a great soul. 'I circulate these papers,' he wrote hastily on one case, in which

[1] *The Friend of India*, Serampur, 31st January, 1861.

he had successfully insisted on justice being done at the risk of a tumult[1]. 'They are an instance of the principle that we should do what is right without fear of consequences. To fear God and to have no other fear is a maxim of religion, but the truth of it and the wisdom of it are proved day by day in politics.'

I have now briefly told the story of Lord Dalhousie's work in India. I am painfully conscious that there are many of his acts, indeed whole departments of his all-pervading activity, that I have been compelled, by want of space, to leave out of the narrative. But I shall have written in vain, if I have written a single sentence which is not justified by the authoritative records of his rule. For I feel that the man was so great, that his policy was so prescient, and that his work has been so enduring, that one word of exaggeration or over statement would be alike a disobedience to his dying wish, and a disloyalty to his memory.

[1] I quote from Sir Charles Bernard's personal recollection of the words.

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